

Checkmate

by Kayden Pause

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Summary: A young prince wishes for freedom from a life that isn't for him. And on the day of his Coronation, he gets it. But is it everything he thought it was? (Rated T with some M Scenes. Proceed with caution. And hey, HiJack!)

1. Chapter 1

****Checkmate. ****

****So, another day, another project. I've had this idea in my head for quite some time. Its a little different from my other Big Four Story. ****

****But so we're clear, I have NOT put Dragon Breath on Hiatus. It will be updated in a few days. So if you came here wondering if that was the case, you should know that I am also working on Chapter 11 at this time so watch out for it. ****

****So, lets do some of that fun legal and technical stuff. ****

****Disclaimer: Dreanworks and Disney own my Fandoms. My Fandoms own me. I own a lawyer and she says Dreamworks and Disney don't care what I own as long as it isn't money. ****

****Warning: There will be some M Rated scenes in this story. For various reasons. If you feel squemish, this may not be the story for you (though I wish it were). ****

****Note: if you see an asterisk, aka * in the story, please refer to the bottom for authors notes that may clear up confusion in the story. ****

****And remember to review and follow! It motovates me to give you**

more!**

Here is Chapter 1 of Checkmate.

* * *

><p>The sky was clear, the ocean was calm and the people were bustling in the streets. It could only mean one thing.<p>

High noon. The large clock in the square had just struck that time and for a moment everything came to a standstill... no real noise aside from the bells ringing from the tower. This was how it always was... the hands seemed to literally pause life... if offered everyone a chance to stake their surroundings... and enjoy a moment of quiet contemplation.

It was the one time of day you could truly find peace. And you could take in the fantastic sights Berk had to offer. From her bustling markets, her busy farms, the lush dense forests, the crystal blue oceans.

It was a perfect city on the edge of the country. Its waters are vast, its culture is strong and its people are proud. And why shouldn't they be? Under my father's leadership the city has thrived better than it has in years

And its all mine. Well, it will be, if my father has anything to say about it... he's been pushing for my coronation and his retirement.

Yet i remain far from the real throne, I'm currently sitting upon my own personal chair overlooking the vast vista of my city... watching the people below as they settle back into their regular routine as the bells finish for the day.

It was always a fantastic sight to take in and it was something I took time to do every day.

Us Haddocks have always held our people's interest with a keen eye and a strong heart. You could say I take that even further. Everyday I take in the lives of my people... their names and lives unknown to me... but this is my way of saying I know a little bit

A small grumble beside me roused me from my starrng. A momentary distraction as I pet my faithful friend Toothless. And the family pet, of sorts. He was truly one-of-a-kind.

Initially he was half lizard and half canine. The size and attitude of a sweet mutt but the appearance and dry smooth skin of a common Salamander*. There was no name for his species yet as he was recently discovered... and no scientific breakthroughs were to be made on my pet.

"Another beautiful day, eh Toothless?" I said, scratching his ear and watching his back paw kick. He made a soft pleased sound in return. "I know, soon you'll have your own mansion if I have anything to say about it!" I said with a laugh as his tongue lolled out of his mouth and he rolled onto his back.

Yes, this was going to be my city. As of tonight, as it was. You see,

today is my...

"There's my birthday boy, all grown up!" My mother said as she entered my room without knocking... a problem that lead to more than a few uncomfortable exchanges with the woman. She tried to respect my privacy but what can you do?

I stood as she wrapped her arms around me and gave my cheek a small kiss. "You look so handsome, Hiccup. The spitting image of your father" She said, patting the spot she kissed, to which I smiled, noting how I looked much more like her. "I look exactly the same as I did yesterday Mother."

But she had to humor the idea that I was still her little boy, as that was what a mother did, no? "Don't remind me... watching my little boy grow into such a fine leader is hard enough on my old heart. But I'm sure such a popular young man will take good care of them."

Toothless suddenly gave a yip behind me and Mom gave him a pet, "You too, Toothless." She said as he nuzzled her hand.

I looked up at her and motioned back toward the window, "So, what brings you to my quarters Mother? I wasn't expecting you until the party this evening." I said, leaning on the railing instead of taking my place back on my seat.

"A Mother always knows when her child is distraught... and considering the rather heated discussion you and your father had recently, your mother is here to set you at ease about it." She said as she crossed her arms and took her place beside me.

And oh, how I sought to be set at ease about it. It was a particularly uncomfortable situation and a very touchy subject with my father and I. He and I got along about most things... but this was very different for me.

"Son, it is your duty to the throne. All Kings and Queens need an heir to continue the blood line. Its simply how it must be. You know what I always told you about your father and I."

I quickly cleared my throat and took on a mocking tone of my Mother after hearing this story a few dozen times, "'Hiccup, when I met your father, I felt the same way you did. Trapped, pushed into something I didn't want! But after I got to know your father it was easy to fall in love with him-' " my mother finally stopped me with a laugh and a small shove.

"The point is dear, this is a part of who you are. So you can continue on the proud Haddock name. Plus... I hear your bethrothed is a real beauty... her name is Astrid Marie Antwonette*."

I sigh and look out at the city that would be mine, "You know a name means nothing. But I understand Mother... but you have to understand where I come from. I want to seek my love. I want them to love me for who I am... not my birthright..."

But my mother smiled and pat my shoulder, "And that is because you're a twenty year old boy. Many your age crave the same thing. But my dear, that will be the point. The Antwonettes are wealthy! She can't

love you based solely on fortune because she has her own!"

Well, that certainly set me at ease... she sighed and put a hand on my shoulder, "Hiccup, I promise that if you give her a chance you'll like her. And if not... we can discuss it later. But this is how it is. The dowry is paid and you are to be the King of Berk. Please stop argueing it... for me."

I want to argue it further but I know my family... my heritage. It calls for tradition. Especially among the young affianced royals. I don't have to like it... but kaybe my mother will be right? This princess Astrid may be the most striking and poised woman I have ever laid eyes upon?

She suddenly produced my signiture blade from her knapsack. "Now, I was able to convince your father to-"

I suddenly grabbed the blade and sprung it to life! Fire encasing the entirety of the blade, and I gave it a few test swings, until my mother grabbed my hand once again, "allow you to continue your weapon training as long as you remain responsible with it. We don't need a repeat of last time, do we?"

Ah, dear Mother, always one to bring up the sore subjects of my past... the deed that had invoked removal of my trusty sword. I was merely helping light the lamps... its not my fault the paper was so flammable.

I know why he gave it back... he wanted to set me at ease about my arrangement. It would have been clever if I were dumb enough to not see it.

That doesn't mean I'm stupid enough to not take it back. I certainly wanted my weapon.

"Thank you, Mother, I shall go to Goober at once! Maybe we'll finally get to do some proper sparring today!" I said as she stopped me from sprinting off, "Just remember to be back at Sundown... you need to be here for your Coronation. And to greet the future Queen." She said with a serious tone to her voice...

I smile and nodded, "Yes Mother. I'll be back tonight, I promise." I said as Toothless let out a small whine.

"And take Toothless with ya, you know how antsy he gets when you're gone." She said as I clicked my teeth for the Lizard Dog to follow me and gave him a pet before I holstered my sword to my side.

"Of course Mother... I look forward to tonight." I said as I then launched down the steps... leaving my shimmering home to the streets of my kingdom.

* * *

><p>Gobbers winery and smithy. It may not look like much but we damn well sold half the cities wine and weapons to them. And it was also the place I made my money.<p>

I lowered my cloak and took off my staff before opening the door.

"Gobber! I'm here!" I said as I set my cloak and staff down on the ground. I look around the winery as my compatriots give me the eye. My Ginger friend turned to me as she helped 'Punzie lift a wine Barrel.

"Yeah, and he's late yet again." She said before dusting her tunic before giving me her amused smile as our burly boss stumbles into the room. "Jack, I told ya before, ya gotta be here on time if ya want to keep a job!"

I smiled and began lifting the supplies of grape and strawberry preserves*, "Ah Gobber if you wanted to fire me, you would have done it by now." Which was mostly true. He doesn't want to fire me... but he wishes I would work a bit harder like my female counterparts.

But Gobber was a good natured guy who took a chance on a poor slob like me. I have immense respect for him... and the guy knows his way around a winery as much as he does a forge.

"Well get those preserves into the mixer! We have important clients comin in today and I need you all to pick up the pace! We're providing the wine for the Coronation tonight!" He said, which certainly piqued all our interests...

"You mean... we're catering to the biggest ball since... ever?" Rapunzel said, her hands to her lips to prevent squeeling in excitement.

Gobber smiled, "Yes indeed, Punzie. And that means we need to run to the brew farms to pick up fresh supplies. Can't make a proper batch without those ingredients!" He said with a snaggletooth grin. "So get off your lazy arses and get to unloading! You have a long journey!"

I was just about to add a witty quip until the front door bell rang... signaling the attention of everyone else.

And thank goodness it did. Because the boy who walked in was a sight to behold.

He was slightly shorter than I was. But only by maybe an inch or two. His hair was long... flowing brown. His eyes were the most striking about him. The color of Jade... a beautiful green that matched his fair skin adorned with freckles perfectly.

Gobber gave him a pat on the shoulder, "Ah, Hiccup! Its good to see ya again! I'm guessin' your father finally decided to let ya come back?"

Hiccup... what an odd little name for such an interesting boy... and then I noticed the creature beside him.

Rapunzel tapped my shoulder, "Better put your eyes back in your head before Gobber chops it off." She said as I suddenly picked up four boxes of supplies.

"Well, he wants me to be okay with the change so I assume he allowed this to set me at ease." He said... and I noted his voice didn't sound like I expected it to. It sounded rather medium pitched and a

little nasally but otherwise charming.

Gobber nodded, "He has your best interests at heart, Hiccup. Don't think it's nothing he had to do at your age..." he said before elbowing Hiccup's side, "Still, he wasn't as much of a stick in the mud back then." He joked, eliciting a laugh from the smaller man.

I stacked up the supplies while I watched the exchange. "Well, I didn't come here to dally around. Shall we?" He said, holding up an odd shaped sword hilt. His pet barked beside him as my boss nodded, "Aye, we shall! Merida, 'Punzie, Jack, I expect that work done. When ya finish, come find me so i can give you the paperwork for the ingredients, ya hear me?" He yelled at us before walking away with the Brunette.

I quickly began stacking up boxes... I wasn't putting them up with any sort of organization before Merida stopped me. "Jack, you're gonna piss him off..." she said from her post.

"Oh come now, neither of you are interested in seeing ol' Gobber throw down?" I asked, eying the two.

"I'm more interested in keeping my job so I can keep my house, you know?" Rapunzel said, and I shrugged, "So we throw this up quickly, watch Gobber and that guy spar for a second, doible back for the supplies, work a little later to organize it tonight, and then take a couple days off so he can count the fortune he's gonna make from all our hard work." I said... yet another one of my brilliant schemes to get my way. I was actually quite good at them.

Merida quickly grabbed her bow and arrows and let out a sigh, "The things you draw me into, Frost..." she said as she handed Rapunzel her dagger. But the blonde was still a bit reluctant, "Guys, we're gonna get fired..." she tried as Merida and I walked toward Gobbers sparring area... and Merida counted back from three... two... one... "Wait for me!"

* * *

><p>I stood across from the poorly groomed blonde man... I had changed my stance to a left handed one... one of my unique talents was the ability to use both of my hands in combat.*<p>

"Come on old man, scarred of a little boy?" I goaded as he tightened his sword attachment to his missing hand. He chuckled, "Coming from the peg leg who hadn't even drawn his weapon?" He said as my sword sprung to life... letting my relaxing pet let out a small curious sound.

It sprung to life, coated in flame and i gave it a twirl, "Sorry, I just didn't want to scare you into surrender so fast."

Gobber smiled, "Talk is cheap! Lets see what ya got!" He said, lunging forward. I quickly sidestepped and parried his blade away from him before resuming my stance and spinning my sword.

Gobber smiled, "Just as sharp as your father was at your age." He said as the engaged us in a quick succession of strikes. I ducked under his stab and delivered a swift kick to his own peg leg and sent the man tumbling to the dirt... and with a quick flip and tuck I was

pointing my blade at the older man.

We starred off for a moment... my eyes regarding his own as we starred off... and suddenly I returned the blade to its sheath and we both shared a jolly laugh as I helped the man stand up and pat his back.

"Your father wouldn't be prouder of you. Just as sharp as him and a quick tongue like your mum." He said as he reattached his 'hand' to his stub. I was about to use my silver tongue to make him laugh a bit more but he quickly turned a hardened glare to where I wasn't looking.

"Ah ya layabouts! I told ya to get a move on when stock was finished! Not spy in on my personal lessons!" He said as the other three workers appeared. The three were roughly my age. And all armed.

The first girl was blonde. She was dressed lightly in a purple tunic and light leather breast plate, a single dagger strapped to her side. What was most notable about her was her hair. It was nearly shimmering blonde and tied up in several bows and ribbons in a way that not only looked like it took an extensive amount of time but it also appeared that it only would work on her.

The next was another young lady. She was dressed much more simply. A green tunic that was scandalously short... just above her ankles* and a brown hooded cloak... though I was unsure if it would house all of her hair... which was a bright curly red. It was quite messy and yet it suited her in a contrast to her sharp features... including her eyes that mimicked that of the sea. On her shoulder rested a composite bow and a whole quiver of arrows.

The last was a man possibly a bit older than myself.* Like the others, his hair was his most notable feature. It was white as snow itself. His eyes were icy blue and bright. He wore tights that certainly didn't fit him well. They also appeared torn. He also wore a blue cloak with a white doublet underneath. He carried a staff of wood... and that was all.

I looked at them and back to my father's friend, "Do I need to inform Father that you abuse your employers?" I said with an amused smile... and the blond chuckled, "If I'm so abusive, they wouldn't be here and I would be out of business. Sometimes I forget you aren't as formal as your old dad. Hiccup, this is Jack, Rapunzel and Merida. My best workers... and my only workers. You three this is Hiccup, he's-"

I put my arm into his gut... and he gave me a confused stare... I couldn't blame him. He was probably under that old stereotype that all royals liked making their titles known. But I was not like those royals.

Everyone began treating me differently the minute they found out I was the prince... and the opportunity to know three people my age as... a normal person... well, it was a very tempting idea.

"I'm no one important Gobber. Right? I'm just... an commoner." I said, "Stopping in to see an old friend... you really shouldn't talk me up so often." I shot him a look that said more than enough of a hint... let me have this chance.

The blonde scratched his head, "Well, your family is always noble in my eyes, Hiccup..." he lied... giving me a skeptical look. He knew how I felt... a confession that came with months of sparring.

Jack nodded, "Hmm... you have some impressive fighting skills. Where does one procure a sword like that?" He asked, examining the hilt with curiosity. And I felt a bit odd... having the man examine it so closely

Rapunzel belted his shoulder, "Jack... don't be rude. It's his sword." She said, smiling at me, "Don't mind him. He's a real scullion sometimes."

He looked back at her, "Really 'Punzie? A scullion? You called me a scullion? What the hell is a scullion?"

I stepped in before the argument ensued if there was one to be had and sprung my sword to life, watching the flames ignite.

"It's bathed in a Dragon spit. It's an alchemical compound that springs it to flame once it touches open air. It's a handy sword." I said, Toothless letting out a happy sound beside me.

The Blonde woman named Rapunzel took to Toothless immediately, scratching his ears and throwing caution to the wind.

The red head named Merida spoke now, "Remember that speech about being rude, 'Punzie?" She asked as Rapunzel sighed and crossed her arms, "Shut up."

Gobber spoke up this time, "Alright ya three lolliaggers! Get to movin' along! You have to pick up the supplies." He said, walking back to his forge and hammering a piece of metal.

My curiosity got the better of me as I fell in line with the trio, "What's the big occasion?" I asked. Jack laughed, "We're serving wine to the new king tonight." He said as I paused in my speech.

"Ya okay?" Merida asked, snapping her fingers at me a bit... causing the others to laugh as I jumped slightly. "Yeah I'm fine... so you guys have to, what, leave the city?" I asked, hopeful.

I know it seemed foolish to do this on my coronation but... it sounded so adventurous! So fun! And with fighters my own age! Even if I got caught my father may finally understand that I'm independent! And worthy of making my own decisions in the world... like who to marry.

These three have that freedom. The freedom I crave so much.

No great leader ever got anywhere without trying.

"Unfortunately... it's a short walk but there's no shortage of monsters lining the path. Nothing big... a few Gekus and Vespids* but nothing we can't handle."

I smiled at them, "Are you sure? You might need an extra hand out there..." I said. And the three smiled at me. I felt warm inside at their acceptance.

Jack gave me a wink and a toothy grin, "Well then, I'm sure we can show you the ropes. Lets hurry. If we're two seconds late, we'll be the main course at the King's dinner."

* * *

><p>And so there it is! My newest venture into the big four!

**As you can see its very different from Dragons Breath. Its also more oriented toward the second movie! Which I recently saw... did anyone else think it was awesone too? **

**Anyway, if you're here wondering what the * were for, I will explain them now. **

*** 1 - as to what Toothless is in this story, I didn't want to make him a Dragon... but I also didn't want to make him generic like a dog. This is a fantasy world: which means anything I can conjure. Just imagine Toothless as he is, minus the wings and being the size of an actual dog.**

*** 2 - No. That is NOT Astrids last or middle name. But Princess Antwoniette was the name of a beautiful princess... and while she and Hiccup might not have a relationship, I want her percieved as such.**

*** 3 - The preserves are merely fermented grapes and strawberries that are made into wine. **

*** 4 - Okay. If you watch the movie, at the very beginning, you will notice that Hiccup updates the map with his left hand. But Hiccup uses his sword like a righty. And he shoots a bow like a lefty. So I purposely made Hiccup ambidextrous for this story (plus I'm left handed myself.) **

*** 5 - That was considered very short for a young lady in those days.**

*** 6 - in this story, Jack is obviously not an immortal 17 year old ghost. If HTTYD2 is five years in the future, that sets Rapunzel and Merida at 23, Jack at 22, and Hiccup at 20.**

Remember to Review and follow! I need those to motivate me!

Until next time.

2. Chapter 2

Checkmate Chapter 2

Well I want to start this chapter by saying...

**You're all amazing! I had lost my phone for and when I come back, BAM all these new favorites and follows! I was so excited that I had to write the second chapter immediatly! **

**This is a rare treat for you all but you've earned it! I've never

had a story take off so fast!**

**On to reviews: **

Asd: Gobber is a friend of the family but still a common man. But yes, he is Hiccup's personal trainer.

**Raffs: Well thank you! I worked really hard on developing meshing attitudes while still retaining their personalities. And I just saw the second movie! I had to throw her in there! **

Jenskuchu: Well then, I will keep writing for you! I hope to see more reviews in the future!

**Rjalfredo: Well, we can't have the prince flaunting about eh? Glad you enjoyed it and love me for it! **

EverLastingTime: Thank you! I give you an update!

Remember to review and follow. I'll answer all reviews here in my authors notes... and speaking of notes...

**Disclaimer: Disney and Dreamworks own my fandoms. My fandoms own me. I own a Lawyer. She says Disney and Dreamworks don't care what I own as long as it's not money. **

Warning: This story will have M rated content. If you're squeamish, I recommend another story.

**Note: when you see an Asterisk, aka *, that means there will be information at the end of the chapter that will clear up any confusion. **

**On with the chapter. **

Enjoy.

* * *

><p>Rolling green hills, the trees were lush with fruits and vegetation. A small breeze only enhanced the smell of fresh air.<p>

We had only just left the gates but I already felt incredible at the world around me... I allowed myself to take a deep breath.

In 20 years, I have never left the city gates for any reason excluding vacation to my cousins villa... in an armed caravan. Where no one could see me.

I've been watching these very plains from my room for years and yet seeing it up close makes my heart beat a little bit faster. It offers hope that someday soon I'll have more time to do this. As king, I will have so little time to do anything other than rule my country.

And I have accepted that fate... but this feels so much more like the life for me.

The plains of Berk. They were just as beautiful as I always thought

they were... I knelt down to sniff the flowers on the ground. They smelled sweet and fresh... like my freedom.

It only makes me more excited when I think how this will be mine as well... a secret I desperately wanted to keep from my new acquaintances.

It wasn't so much I was worried about how people would treat me when they found out about it. The monarchy was strong and her people were happy with life, or happy enough.

Even the poor are fed everyday. And there are several bunkhouses that reside in the city to make room for them.

It was simply how everyone treated me differently the moment they found out. Like I was this delicate piece of jewelry that needed to be handled with great care. Like if they mess up I'll curse them and send guards upon their house.

My father would be ashamed of that and so would I. I wish people wouldn't believe those foolish rumors about nobels and royals.

"Another day in the plains... its a little after noon. If we move quickly we should be back just before the evening..." Jack said boredly from beside me, "Ready to move?" He asked me. Truth be told, I wanted to see everything. Yet I wanted to stay and take even all this in.

I knew how much trouble I would be in if my parents knew I was here... so I nodded at him and stared out for a moment longer to take it all in.

I was here. I was doing this.

Toothless quickly nudged my hand and I dusted myself off, standing up quickly. "Of course... those are just my Mothers favorite flowers." I said, raising my hand to scratch the back of my head, a silly habit I picked up when I was nervous.

"The Venom Tulip?" Merida asked with a bewildered look on her face. Damn, a small slip up... but I quickly managed an answer. "Yes... she is an Alchemist*. And she uses the Venom Tulip to brew her favorite poison." I said, recovering. And it worked, because Merida said, "I might have to stop by for some of that. Where is her shop?" And I quickly stumbled around for a lie... but it was unneeded.

Jack put a hand up. "Looks like we'll be busy today. Look out." He said as a monster appeared. That was fast. We had only traveled a few feet and yet we had already ran into one. It looked like a small tree spirit. It had green glowing eyes and appeared to frolick.

I was so fascinated. I knew it would attack if I approached it but... I wanted to see the wild monster up close. It was almost cute in appearance. Toothless growled at it... sensing there was more to this monster than meets the eye.

It was then I noticed that the others were looking at me expectantly. I raised my hand to the back of my head and scratched, "Is something the matter?" I asked, and Rapunzel spoke up, "Boggarts hate fire and

direct strikes. This is all you. You have the best advantage with your sword.*" She said... and I was stunned into shocked silence. Wait... we were going to fight them? It wasn't harming us...

Yet. They are still wild monsters regardless... but I've never fought one. And going into battle against something I've never fought is nearly terrifying. But Toothless appeared eager enough to battle with me, snarling and snapping from his crouch,

I let out a sigh, knowing that my ruse would be up the moment I tried to fight it. I wasn't quite ready to give up all my secrets but this one needed to be said. "I'm sorry you guys... I'm not really an adventurer... this is the first time I've ever been outside the city." I said. I awaited and expected their scorn and ridicule.

And why shouldn't they? I lied to them about... well, everything. I still was. "I'm sorry..." I said, hanging my head low. But the scorn never came.

I felt a hand on my shoulder... and looked up to see Jack starring down at me with a smile... my heart beating a bit as I looked into his blue eyes... nervously expecting a shove.

I looked at his kind face as he let out a chuckle. "We're all beginners at some point. Its normal. Though you should have told us, we wouldn't hate you for it. We can show you the ropes, Hic." He said, putting an arm over my shoulder as I smiled at the nickname.

I should have known... they aren't like some nobels who ridicule you for everything.

"Okay, so now that you know its a boggart, lets explain what it does. Ladies." He said, motioning to Merida and Rapunzel. The red head stepped forward first. "Boggarts are initially a small sprit that inhabits the body of a young tree. When they're born they frolick and act cheery all the time." Then 'Punzie took over. "But over time they begin to embody the worst of nature. They carry disease, viscious claws, poisonous breath. They may not be tough to a fighter but they have claimed many lives of trade caravans through their attacks and whole villiages through their disease."

I let the history lesson sink in as I undid my sword hilt. "So its weak to fire and direct strikes?" I ask, waiting to spring it to life. Jack nodded at me, "Indeed. It should be easy for you with your sword skills." He said... sounding very confidant.

I nod and press the button on the side of my sword, watching it spring to life and encase itself in flame. I steadily approach the Boggart. It appears to be chasing some form of bug... whether in fun or food I don't know.

Suddenly it does a small twirl before noticing me. The bug is long forgotten, and it lowered its hands in... confusion?

The creature pauses to regard me for a moment... its eyes appearing innocent. I raise my sword slightly and the flame comes into view. The monsters eyes suddenly narrow and its claws suddenly appear. They're elongated and vicious.

There it was. An angry, feral monster. Its eyes lightened and glowed

a bright yellow suddenly as it let out a ear busting shriek and lifted its claws and prepared a charge.

It looked vicious now. Its eyes were angry... its mouth in a continuous scowl . Its claws whipping wildly through the air as it began to run directly at me. I was a bit scarred... but not enough to not see its poor form. Its charge was as wild as the rest of it... untrained, sloppy.

I quickly side stepped and brought my sword down upon that monsters head. I watched it shriek once nore and suddenly watched it burst into a pile of bark and field grass.

The monster was no more. And I had vanquished it. It took a moment for it to sink in... I defeated a monster. Rapunzel let out a happy yell for me as the three approached.

Jack spoke first. "Great job, Hic! One hit!" He said, patting my shoulder. And I smiled for them... my cheeks flushed with a mixture of happiness and embaessment.

Merida spoke up this time, "Lets finish showing you the ropes and get those ingredients before Gobber busts our heads for being late." She said. I nodded and motioned for the trail.

It filled me with more excitement than I cared to admit... but I ciuldn't stop thinking about how this small journey of little consequence was going to change my life forever.

* * *

><p>He was a natural with a sword. And a sight to see as he steadily became more comfortable with fighting monsters.<p>

I had to admit... Hiccup caught on quickly to the fighting. Identifying which enemies would do best against his sword. His quick adaptation was helpful when we were surrounded by monsters.

Take now, for instance. We had shown Hiccup how we handle other monsters. Like Merida handled Vespids* and other fast moving creatures... as they never saw her arrows coming.

Or how 'Punzie was on monsters like Gekus* or any monster that had a debilitating effect. She could heal anything with her magic. And she was quick with a blade.

Speaking of magic... "Brontide!"* I cried out as a bolt of ice magic suddenly erupted from my staff and caught a Brownie* in its chest, instantly killing it.

I used the offensive magics when I was in a group. Magic was a difficult but worthwhile lesson to learn. That was a lesson Hiccup learned fast. Not all monsters are harmed by normal attacks.

Rapunzel sheathed her dagger, "We're making good time. The farm should be over that hill." She said as Merida spoke up, "In no small thanks toyou Hiccup." She said with a satisfied tone.

The beautiful brunette scratched his head again as he 'sheathed' his

sword. "Its nothing."He said, trying to be humble. It was almost cute of him to try. He was a fine swordsman for someone who had never actually used it outside of training.

I motioned for everyone to head up the hill to get the supplies. There it was. The farm was bustling. Vineyards full of grapes and strawberries among other plants. It was a small farm of little notice out here... but they made their fortune by selling wine materials.

I could smell it from here. There was always a lingering sweet scent in the air... it made me want to get drunk on wine. It seems silly, I know... but it was as intoxicating as the wine itself.

Merida took the order sheet and said, "'Punzie and I will go grab the stuff. You two stay and keep watch for any monsters." She holstered her bow a bit more and the two walked to the farm and were greeted by a farm hand.

I was alone with this beautiful man... but I had no idea his opinion on same sex relationships.

I was a man who couldn't let gender decide my love or attraction for someone... I found their personalities much more enjoyable. And Hiccup was certainly interesting.

The boy smiled, his eyes filled with wonder. "Is it everything you wanted and more?" I asked jokingly... but he didn't. "Yes... its magnificent. The world is so vast and this is just the tip of the iceberg. How much more is out there I wonder? Have you ever thought about that? You're obviously skilled."

I smiled at his almost childlike fascination with adventuring. It was endearing of him. I chuckled and spoke up, "I've considered it... but for now I only want to do this. I'm still young. I can adventure in a year or more... but it sounds like fun. I have to admit."

"Exploring vast caves and lands for treasures and history. Can you imagine anything more exciting?" He asked, looking at me. I had to admit... the prospect of traveling on the road sounded... agreeable. And certainly exciting enough.

I smiled at the Brunette. "I think I would find that very exciting." I said as I watched Merida and Rapunzel leave the winery with a few knapsacks full of supplies.

They tossed one at each of us and we shouldered the packs. "Lets move. We need to get back."

But we froze before we took two steps. For at the bottom of the hill lied something no one could expect.

A terrifying creature... a Manticore.* Its eyes were soulless black and it stared at us with a predatory gleam in its eye.

Why was it here? Manticores were primarily desert dwellers. Not that I wanted to ask it to go back home... I quickly unholstered my staff and took aim... but was thrown off by the monsters mighty roar. It flung its tail and fired a series of spikes in our direction.

"Move!" I cried as we dove and dodged the spikes... we recovered and set about fighting this monster.

Merida fired two arrows in quick succession, catching the monster in its shoulder. It certainly hurt the monster but did nothing more than anger it. It took a leap at her but she rolled and ran, notching another arrow and shooting its side.

It roared in pain and anger as I quickly shouted out, "Frigile!" And blasted an ice spike into its maw. "Shut up!" I called at the monster as it turned to me in absolute fury... a bit of blood dripping from his maw. It growled at me and flung some more spikes. I rolled as one caught the side of my leg and grazed it... pain exploding in my leg as Hiccup engaged it, making it flee at the sight of his fiery sword.

Rapunzel quickly came to my aid and placed her hand on my leg... allowing her healing magic to shut the wound... it still stung but I was able to walk. I stood and nodded at her as Hiccup swung at the burly beast as it cowered from his fire... roaring at him to get back... but he finally lunged forward and caught the monster where it hurts... his eye... the monster reeled and tried to claw at the burning wound but to no avail... slowly the monster fell... and died there.

We all starred at each other for a moment while Hiccup reclaimed his sword.

And then he asked the question that was on all of our minds.

"What the hell was that thing doing here?"

* * *

><p>We offered plausible theories almost the entire way home, only occasionally stopping to battle another monster.<p>

Even I knew that Manticores were Dessert monsters. There was no way it was here naturally... and that being the case... who brought it here?

"Maybe it was a traveling circus? I've heard they domesticate monsters like that." Jack proposed... but Merida shook her head, "Jack, just because you came from a circus doesn't mean it would have." It was a bit of comic relief as Rapunzel and I let out a laugh... and Jack looked mocked offended, "Hey I resent that. My mother was the prettiest bearded lady I've ever seen."

And for once... I felt at ease. This was more my element than being a king... the adventuring... the treasure... the excitement. And then there were these three. I've never had more fun in all my life... and it was with people who thought I was just another no body.

But my life was as a King... as much as I hated it. We were back. And my life had to continue. With Coronation...

Oh no... it was past six! My Party had started! I quickly began to panic and handed Merida my bag, "I'm sorry you guys... I'm late! My mom is gonna give me the switch!" I said, making an excuse to get away. I didn't wait for them to stop me... I ran to the castle with

Toothless on my tail. "Come on buddy! We gotta move!" I said as the castle came into view.

Oh she was going to kill me. She was going to tell Dad and he would kill me. I ran through the castle as fast as my legs would carry me.

But Fate had its plan for me as I approached the door... "Hiccup Horrendus Haddock the Third! Where have you been!" My mother said as she nearly ran up to me. "I understand being the birthday boy but you were gone for six hours! You're lucky your father was able to stall them all!"

I quickly stammered out an apology and said. "I'm sorry Mother... but I met some people... my age. They work for Gobber... I guess we just got caught up and didn't notice the time... I'm sorry Mother." I said as her expression softened and she patted my cheek, "Well... its hardly my place to tell a king how to enjoy himself, yes? Come. There are many people you have to meet. Slip your coat on and I'll take you to them." She said as I began undoing my armor and donning my regular clothes. "Who do I have to meet?"

My mother smiled, "Well aside from your beautiful bride..." she said as I let out a soft groan, "You also have to meet our neighboring Lord. Hes a strong warrior with hardy soldiers... and he may make a good ally for you."

"Who is he?" I asked, curious.

"His name is Lord Drago Bludfist."

* * *

><p>And with a cliffhanger I leave you with the second chapter!

**Thank you to all my favorites and follows! You all make me so happy to write on! **

**On with the asterisk notes. **

*** 1- Alchemy is an ancient technique combining certain plants, also known as reagents, to create potions and poisons **

*** 2- Boggarts are a creature made on bark from dead trees. They are pacifists if left alone. But enraged they can be a vicious monster. The bark is possessed by a spirit that has died and not moved on to the afterlife. Being made if wood puts them at a disadvantage against Fire and blunt attacks.**

*** 3- Vespids are basically a flying wasp the size of a small child. They're quick and relentless if they get their stingers on you. But they are easy targets for long range fighters.**

*** 4- Geku is a plant tyoe monster that can spit venom across great distances. But they're useless against close range attacks.**

*** 5- Brontide is a move I adapted from the game Dragons Dogma. It creates this awesome ice attack I love.**

*** 6- Brownie is not a sweet little treat you may be thinking of. They have the appearance of a demented knome mixed with Dobby from Harry Potter. They have vicious claws and sharp fangs... but lacking armor, they offer little resistance to magic.**

*** 7- Manticores are a vicious half Lion half Scorpion monster adapted from Greek Mythology. They dwell in deserts where they, much like a normal lion, reign supreme. They have a thick hide, sharp teeth and a tail that shoots large spikes. **

Anyway, I hope to see this story climb higher as I post more! Be sure to Review and Follow!

Until next time!

3. Chapter 3

**Checkmate. Chapter 3. **

**Well, since I'm still watching my reviews favorites and follows increase by the chapter, I will indulge you some more with another chapter. **

**You guys are awesome. **

Onto Reviews!

Rjalfredo: I'm sorry. I can't give you HiJack lovins yet. True love is like a strong house and requires a strong foundation. But don't worry... when it happens, it will be good!

Jenshuchu: Thank you. I'm glad you like it.

The Egoist's Girlfriend: It is? Thank you !

Everlastingtime: Thank you. And its no issue. I like making my fans feel special.

**Barefooted Dragon: Ah! I was going to message you about this story and ask you to check it out. I'm glad to see you're here! I already have a plan for this story but I will consider that idea. **

**Thank you to my favorites and follows! If you're new to this story, I hope you will do the same! It motivates me to continue! **

**Now. Legal stuff! **

**Disclaimer: Disney and Dreamworks owns my fandoms. My Fandoms own me. I own a Lawyer. She tells me Disney and Dreamworks don't care what I own as long as its not money. **

**Warning. This story does contain M rated scenes. If you're squeamish, I ask you to turn back now (though I wish you wouldn't.) **

**Note: if you see an asterisk, aka *, there will be explanations at the end of the story to clear up any confusion. **

**Onto Chapter 3! **

* * *

><p>Father was none to happy with me when I arrived. I was in my coat and tie but I was horribly late. He had been stalling the crowd with what he called comedy. It was painful to watch people fake laughing. "We'll discuss this little act of defiance later... for now, adress your people, Hiccup.<p>

"Ladies and Gentlemen, We welcome you to the humble kingdom of Berk!" Came the loud call of my families head servent, yet again over selling my family. "Tonight we dine and dance in celebration for the Coronation of your newest king, following in the foot steps of his father, Stoick Hammish* Haddock, I present to you Hiccup Horrendus Haddock the Third!"

It was truly nerve wracking to be presented to all these people... my stomach was flipping and twisting like a contortionist.

Over the years my family has hosted a number of balls, galas and parties. But I was never required to speak at any of them. In fact I think some of them thought I was mute. Now I was expected to address the entirety of this assembly?

I felt my legs shaking... I felt almost woozy. My vision blurred a bit. But I felt a warm hand on my back to reassure me... and the shaking stopped. I looked out and finally took in the assembly... waiting on me to say my first royal words... as they would make or break everyones impression of me. It was now or never.

I swallowed hard as I stepped up to the to the front of my family hall and took a deep breath... clearing my breath I tried to start, "... Hello." I said. The assembly looked at me expectantly. Of course they wanted more. What king had no grace of fluency when it came to public speaking? I asked Dad if I should prepare a speech.

That had been a fun conversation. Dad was currently in the training yard... when he had told me.

'Son... you're the pride of Berk. I know it seems a little sudden... but I couldn't ask for a better successor." He said as he began examining our wall of axes... looking at... something.

'So... what am I supposed to give a rousing speech? Should I write one?' I askef him, turning to Toothless, tongue hanging out and begging for attention at my feet.

My father had turned to me as I scratched behind my pet's ear.

'Hiccup... the true mark of any leader is the fact that his words don't come from his head. They come from the heart. When the time comes... you'll know what to say.' He said, and he pat my shoulder.

I remember that conversation so well at this moment... the eyes of every Lord and Lady in the country watching me.

No pressure, of course.

I clear my throat, "Umm... I had my conversation with my father a few weeks ago. It was the afternoon of the day he told me I would be his successor. That day I felt a mix of emotions... excitement, pride, and fear. I thought to myself 'How will I lead the country to greatness like my own parents have? I'm not like them...' and then he tells me that when I look out to the people I'll know what to say." I look back at my father who is smiling at me, "And damn if he wasn't right yet again." I said as the crowd chuckled lightly at the joke. The laughter died as I became more confident. "I can't promise any of you that everything will go perfect under my rule. It shouldn't be anyone's policy to tell everyone a lie. Life itself is a challenge even more so for the ones with the most responsibility." I said taking a breath as I looked out to the crowd... hushed into silence, so I continued, "What I can promise you is that as your King, I will always do what is right by me and my people... and should I fail... the responsibility lies on me. A true king looks after his people. It's his duty. His priority. It's his Oath. And it's the one I take today. For Berk and its allies!" I said, raising a mug of wine.

The Lords and Ladies cheered happily... and it seemed the Coronation itself flew away from me. Sure I did the kneeling, the speaking and the recognition receiving but if you asked me to recite it for you, I couldn't.

Before I knew it, the crown was on my head and my family hugging me and congratulating me. I knew being King came with more than a few responsibilities I wasn't sure I was ready for... but it seemed everyone else was confident in me... and that made me okay with them.

That only made me feel guilty for Jack, Merida and Rapunzel... they had shown me the world outside the walls. Made me nearly question my duties and responsibilities... and soon they would know my true identity. I didn't want that to happen... they may hate me for the secrecy.

"It is nice to see such a young man take pride... in his home. You are truly an example for people your age to follow, my liege." Came the voice from behind me. It was dark and gravelly... like a blade being slowly drawn across a stone.

I turned to see the man. He had long dreadlocked hair and he wore a suit of dark metal. His face was heavily scarred. But even all that wasn't the most notable thing about him.

Over his shoulder was a long cape that was dry and smooth. It was black in color. Only a blind man couldn't see he was wearing dragon skin. I knew that only so many had faced dragons and lived... and it seemed this man wore it as proudly as possible.

I nodded at him politely... with a hint of confusion to my voice. "Hello, sir. I don't believe I've had the pleasure of your acquaintance..." I said suddenly feeling a hand upon my shoulder, "Hiccup, this is Drago Bludfist. Lord of the East... he is the man who has turned the tides of war for the past three decades. He was a loyal ally of your father." She said as he took her arm and planted a small kiss on her hand, "Ah, Val, always so kind when it comes to praise. It is only matched by your beauty..." he said nodding at her as my mother giggled..

Creepy but that was how high society behaved, it seemed. Drago turned his attention back to me, "But I am sure you have more important things to do than sit and chat with an old man... I shall take my leave... I hope you enjoy the party. It's certain to be unforgettable." He said nodding at me and my mother.

She smiled, "He's a bit odd but he is very strong. Personally and through his armies. He's a valuable ally, Hiccup." She said as she patted my shoulder as I was suddenly greeted by a beautiful blonde woman. There she was.

I knew this was my bride to be, Astrid. She did a small courtsey and smiled at me. Her hair was braided... but that which hung loose was curled and cascaded down her face charmingly. "Hello, my dear King. It is truly an honor to meet you." She said as she held her hand to me.

I knelt and kissed it slightly. "The pleasure is mine... my queen." I said.

And then it finally hit home. I was engaged. And I had no idea how I felt about it.

* * *

><p>"There is just no satisfying you is there?" Merida said as she and Rapunzel squashed a fair share of grapes with their freshly washed feet.<p>

I grumbled from my post as I took stock of the wines. "Well, when Gobber said we would be working in the castle, I assumed we would be serving the wine. Not making and stocking it."

Rapunzel giggled from her spot, "You're just mad because Hiccup ran off from you. Oh so tragic to be infatuated..." she said. I flipped her off, and retorted, "This isn't some fairy tale 'Punzie. People don't fall in love at first sight. He just happens to be a male I find attractive. Nothing more." I said, "Aggregio Pavalii..." I said as I marked the casket.

"Although it struck me odd... why did he have to run off so soon? What was so important." I asked... but Merida had to add a witty quip. "Hmm, maybe he's like us. Always finding an excuse to run away from you."

I sighed and stared at the aged barrel of wine... thinking about him. Oh I was by no means in love with him... but there was something to him... something that made me want to get to know him just a bit better.

"Jack, I was just kidding, don't take it to heart." Merida said, stomping a bit more. Rapunzel looked over at her, "Wow, two whole sentences without a single comeback... pulling on his heartstrings pretty roughly, dear." She said and Merida scoffed.

"Ah, I said worse things to him before breakfast. Now listen here Frost, you and I know that nothing I say to you means anything-"

"I wanna find him... again." I said simply, marking down two barrels in the same year. I looked back at the two who had stopped their

smashing long enough to look back at me. I regarded them with serious eyes.

"He asked me when you two were getting the supplies if I had ever thought about... dropping all this. And going on an adventure. All three of us know that answer." I said.

It was certainly true. Each one of us eager young, eager and skilled with our respective attacks. But we always felt trapped... missing an important element to our odd little group... A warrior. I knew that Hiccup was that element. He was swift, smooth, and a natural on the battle field.

All that matters is finding him.

"You really think hes that piece that will allow us to... drop everything for adventure? We just met him today." Rapunzel said, hands on her hips.

"I can't say for certain. No one can." I countered her as she sighed. Merida spoke up, "First inpressions are always the strongest 'Punzie. We all got a good vibe from him... so where do we start?"

"Alright ya lazy Mary's. Come take a break. Apparently I have to be appropriate and fair to my employees now." Gobber said as he entered the room... very obviously drunk.

I had to admire him being the first intoxicated person at the party... as he made the drinks themselves. "Ya wanna see somethin life changin? Go watch the first dance of the King and queen... now that is somethin." I pat his shoulder as he fell down, allowing the three of us to pass him.

When I finally entered upon the ballroom... he was right. It was life changing. Because I saw the king.

In fact, I saw him a lot today...

The king himself accompanied us on our wine trip.

"Son of a bitch."

* * *

><p>I bent my knees ever so slightly as Astrid courtsied at me... it became easier to fall into old traditions when you had a few glasses of wine in you.<p>

I starred at my blonde bride, content enough to dance with her. I enjoyed her company enough... she was very down to earth and relaxed.

" I'll swim and sail on savage seas

With ne'er a fear of drowning

And gladly ride the waves of life

If you will marry me

No scorching sun

Nor freezing cold

Will stop me on my journey.*" Came from the bards playing the music of the night.

I reached forward and took Asrids arm and began to step. And switch and step, one two, switch... over and over as the song picked up pace.

"You dance rather gracefully for a man with one leg. If only men with two legs could say the same." She said with a chuckle.

I nodded and spun her around. "I have a lot of practice..." I said as my eyes scanned the crowd... and my white haired nightmare appeared, "Jack." I said... not realizing how dumb it sounded.

Astrid took to standing across from me, "Who is Jack?" She asked as I gave her a spin. I swallowed hard, "He is no one, my lady. Just a friend of mine."

She nodded as we danced a little more... but she noticed my distress. She didn't realize they were watching me dance. They stood there in a combination of bewilderment and shock.

It was horrible. They knew I had lied to them... yet they continued to watch me. It was so nerve wracking... I pondered the idea of telling them why I lied at all.

I could only hope they accepted my apology... and hope they see the use of having a king as a friend.

"Are you sure my dear? You appear as if you've seen a ghost.*" she said. And I spun her around, "Well... I may as well start off our marriage with honesty. You see, I met some people today... they worked for the local winery, you see. I had accompanied them on a supply run, hence why I was late in the first place."

"I did wonder why your father took the time to tell so many bad jokes..." she said... causing me to chuckle slightly. "But, in all seriousness, I didn't tell them who I was. I didn't want them to treat me differently." I said, "We both said this arranged marriage business isn't for us but... that is what I wanted that out of life, you know? To pick up menial possessions and travel the world... and seek my fame that way... being a king just isn't for me."

Astrid nodded in understanding as we stopped dancing and she motioned to a nearby bench. "You know, that kind of works out for us. You confided in me... so can I confide in you?" She asked, her eyes looking sad and a bit fearful... but I nodded, intending to have an open mind.

She suddenly gestured to a man in the corner of the room... sitting and watching something closely, "He is my personal body guard... and he has been for a long time." She said. "But we have a little more than guarding going on between the two of us." She said.

I raised an eyebrow slightly. So she had a relationship with her guard... I suppose that is agreeable enough. We each have our reasons

and she knew him before me so I cannot blame her for wanting what her heart wants... lest I be a hypocrite.

"We have to give them an heir... and I know how that can be, wanting your first time to be something special with someone you love.. We could do it once and let it be done... we only have to appear as a King and Queen."

I sat back, "It sounds agreeable... I just wish you could love your guard and marry him too... the monarchy is a cruel system." I said and she nodded. I looked at her, "Listen... should apologize to my new friends and hope they forgive my trepidation and lies."

Astrid nodded and pat my hand as she went to rejoin the party... I sat there for all of fifteen seconds before I called a guard over, knowing they couldn't just approach a king without causing some incident.

I instructed him to bring them to me immediately... and I folded my hands in my lap as they approached, everyone too engrossed in the party to really notice the King speaking with commoners.

"So... Happy Birthday." Rapunzel said... trying to start the conversation on a positive note. I nodded at her, "Thank you 'Punzie." I said. "Listen... I know I didn't tell you the truth-" I started only to have Jack interrupt me.

"This is a bit more than a little lie, Hiccup..." he said, his voice sounding almost betrayed in a way. I wanted to offer him my sincerest apologies.

"Yes it is a bit more than a simple lie... but can any of you say, were you in my position, you wouldn't do the same? Every person who ever met me feels the need to tiptoe around me as if they need to watch everything they say to me... I wanted someone to treat me like a normal person... or an adventurer. That's what I want," I said, turning to look at the party, "but custom and tradition have prevented it." I turned to them, "And now I'm king... but the memories of today are still so vivid. When we struck down that monster, I was fearful and excited, my heart pounded in both fear and life... and I knew that was the life for me."

The trio came up to stand beside me, "And you can't leave now can you?" He asked me... and I let my head down, "Not if I want to cause an incident." I looked at him, "You may be thinking what I am about to say is mad, but you have no idea how much I want to be like you three. The money, the parties, the privileges... honestly, there is nothing to it. It's all superficial. You three have freedom to do as you please."

Merida spoke up, "We had wanted to find you again to ask you that very question..." she said, "We had all desired that freedom the open road provides."

"But now you're not an asset to us... because you're needed here." Jack said. "We need to get back to work." He said to them.

But nary another word was spoken as the door to the castle was suddenly busted through!

Debris began flying every which way as the people were suddenly thrown into panic.

A Dragon had just entered the room, spitting fire and roaring loudly enough to shatter glass. But that wasn't even the most notable thing about the dragon. Oh no...

Drago Bludfist was riding on his back. And he did not look happy.

I turned to the other three and drew my flame engulfed sword... and no words were needed as we charged towards the flame and wreckage.

* * *

><p>Ah, Drago. Always making shit tough. At least he isn't screaming like a mad man?

**Anyway, here is your third chapter! Thank you to all the support I have recieved for it! **

Onto Info notes.:

*** 1- Hammish is what many people percieve as Hiccup's real name, and note that Hiccup is his nickname. But I do not know Stoick's middle name, so I made it Hammish so people could say thats where he got his namesake.**

*** 2- Aggregio Pavali is a very sweet wine. But the name came from Dragon Age II. One of my favorite games.**

*** 3- if you haven't seen the secind movie, that song is sung in it. Its a greay song... though Gerard Butler should not sing it.**

*** 4- That was a direct reference to Rise of the guardians. Jack was a ghost.**

**Anyway, next update is to be continued soon! **

**Remember to review and follow. **

Until next time.

4. Chapter 4

Checkmate Chapter 4

**So, sorry for the wait. After writing three chapters right after the other, I'm sure you can imagine I needed a break! **

Thank you to my new favorites and followers. You peeps are awesome!

Here were the reviews I recieved last chapter.

**Rrjalfredo: I have already explained that Its too early for Hijack. Gotta build a real relationship. **

**The Egoist's Girlfriend: Because! I love making my fans angry at me. Owo **

****Barefooted Dragon:** Because, it makes you want more chapters if I cliffhanger you. And Yes. Astrid has a relationship with her guard. She has no real role in the story so her lover isn't worth mentioning.**

****Jenshuchu:** Thank you. I hope he gets that freedom too.**

****Now, legal stuff. ****

****Disclaimer:** Dreamworks and Disney own my fandoms. My fandoms own me. I own a lawyer. She tells me Dreamworks and Disney don't care what I own as long as it isn't money. **

****Warning:** This story does contain M Rated scenes. If you feel squeamish, this may not be the story for you. (Though I wish it was.) **

****Note:** if you see an asterisk, aka *, check my author notes at the end of the story. It may clear up any questions you have. **

****Onto Chapter 4. ****

****Enjoy.****

* * *

><p>This was a nightmare... I only wished I could awake from it. How could I not have seen that Drago was insane? The quiet demeanor... the gravelly voice that sounded stricken with envy.<p>

What kind of king was I? I was watching the entire monarchy system fall apart before my very eyes...

I watched as my Mother and Father ran up the front hall steps and behind the columns... trying to seek safety... or seek me.

They would rightly be furious if they saw me currently charging into battle with three other people. Each of which were commoners.

I looked at them as they followed behind me... they seemed to have momentarily forgotten... or overlooked, my lie about my heritage. And I was glad for it... I worried so long about how they would treat me as a King I should have thought that any king was honest.

That makes two times today I have proven myself to be an unfit ruler.

I looked forward as several men surrounded us, each carrying the emblem of Drago Bludfist's Kingdom.* It was dark, with vicious red fangs that resembled a dragon.

Merida made the first move, firing two arrows into their helmets... watching blood spew from them. It only made me admire her skill even more.

It was then we stopped... several armed men surrounding as I swung my sword to life, swinging it to and fro, fending keeping the men back. We watched them... and waited.

One was bound to be eager.

As it turned out, one brandished his lance at Rapunzel. She sidestepped his lunge and hooked the shaft under her arm, broke the hilt with the pommel of her dagger and used the bladed end to slash his throat... and she ducked under the spray as chaos ensued. One dies and the others charge in. But we were ready.

Their form was surprisingly cheap and untrained for being trained soldiers. The first held his blade high as he charged me, his shield far from his body. I quickly stabbed his chest and kicked him off my blade, spinning to catch another's sword on my arm guard before I cut him across the torso.

Jack swept one under his feet with his staff, stomping and snapping his neck with one move before crying out "Frigor!" And blasting the next with a burst of ice magic... freezing him solid... before Jack gave a spin and smashed the frozen man to pieces.

Merida was at a disadvantage with her bow... but she still used it effectively. She fired off one arrow into her opponent, dropping him like a fly... and taking her bow and choking her second opponent with it... brutal but effective.

Punzie delivered a swift kick the first, bringing her dagger upon the back of his head before flipping around to slash and kick her following opponent.

"Enough!" Drago roared out as the dragon he rode came to a stop. It allowed him to step off his back and get a few feet away before continuing its rampage, "I want to finish you myself. Not only have you proven to be an annoyance... but also you just murdered ten of my best men."

We rushed toward the flame and wreckage towards Drago... the lords and ladies fleeing in terror as the guards and a few of the party guests drew swords and went to battle them.

I drew my sword and stood in sight of the man who had started this, "You dare?! You are starting a civil war!" I cried at him... but he merely gave me this amused smile as he suddenly starred at the monster to destroying my home in front of me, unlatching his spear from his back and twirling it a bit.

"You think I care what a pitiful excuse for a King you are? I can only expect any army you raise under your banner to be almost as useless as you." He said, overlooking me to the others, their weapons drawn and ready, "And now you enlist the aid of the help? You are a truly desperate man. Unfit to rule the throne."

I held up my sword, no longer interested in the blatherings of an obviously mad man. "Talk is cheap. Actions mean much more! If its a fight you seek, a fight you will receive." I quickly said as we circled each other, preparing for combat "Jack I need you to try and quell the fire as best you can. Merida help unwounded survivors out any exit you can find. We will need them. Rapunzel, heal the wounded and get them out." I said... and they didn't wait for affirmations and instead took off running... while I starred hatred into the eye of my foe.

He attempted to call out an order but my sword lashed out and distracted him. He starred at me. I let out a huff of air, "Call your men. It'll be your last words..." I threaten him as he turned his full attention back to me as battle ensued around us.

"You have no claim to the throne. The only way to get anywhere is to stay allied with me." I warned him... he was already on a blacklist even if he surrendered and certainly destined for the executioners axe... debris falling around us from a raging dragon... as to how he even controlled one is a mystery to me.

He merely shook his head, "This is my claim, Child. Power is there for those who can take it. I have no royal lineage to sire off to you. I have no heir. And I know that the crown should be mine. I was always the strongest, the one with the most notable army. Yet I am to remain content while you take the throne? I cannot expect a child like you to comprehend my ideologies."

I sneered at him, "Because they are those of a mad man! And there is only one thing to do with a man man! Like a rabid animal, he must be put down!" I said as he swung his spear back.

"Then talking is done! Face my wrath, oh mighty King!" He said, stabbing forward. I quickly gave him a side step and parry, before swinging it at his face. He dodged but squinted at the heat of the blade before swinging downward. I did a quick roll and kicked his ribs only to have my peg leg and his armor clang. He attempted to stab but I rolled back wards.

He then took a lunge at me, having me spin and attempt to chop his armored hand off. It hit his wrist. But the flames danced upon his hand but he ignored the fire.

He smirked, "My hands have felt dragon fire before, child... no fire can truly burn me like that." He said, cracking his head against mine and causing me to see stars in my dizzy state.

My sword was knocked clean from my hand as it hit the floor. Drago stood over me... smiling.

"Power is there for those who can take it." He said, the tip of his spear inches from my head... I said a soft prayer for my country as death starred me in the face... my vision clearing.

"And your death... will be the first of many showings of it. So I hope you lead a happy life child... because its over-"

And then a mass suddenly slammed into him.

* * *

><p>I had had many dreams and nightmares in my life... this was far worse than any of them. Bodies of ally and foe lay dead on the floor. And more dropped as we moved through the crowd.<p>

Punzie and Merida set about healing and helping the survivors, defending them and having me extinguish the fire with my magics. I sprayed ice all over, watching crystals take over as survivors thanked us and ran for their lives.

Time was running out and we were only so many people. The three of us were string but we can't hold out forever.

I was usually ice cold... but I was sweating at the heat and pure exertion I was putting forth to keep the flames at bay. I watched as the queen Astrid was escorted out... she gave me a smile and nod... as if she knew something I didn't.

Merida quickly shot down a few guards standing in our way as I began to blast huge columns of ice around the kingdom... quelling the dragon fire as best I could. Rapunzel and Merida defended the fleeing Nobels as I provided their way out.

I turned and blasted a man charging at me with an axe as Rapunzel channeled healing magic into a lout who had a cut in his leg. He wobbled out of the clearing to safety. I took in the view. No noticeable survivors were nearby... excluding Drago's men.

It was getting difficult. Many were already down... and with less targets to defeat, more of Drago's men turned toward us. I suddenly heard an awful gurgle from beside me as I watched Rapunzel pull her dagger from a man's throat. He was less than five feet away from me.

She glared at me, her hair was gritty and dirty with soot, "Damn it Jack! Pay attention!" She said as she turned and gave the guy behind her a swift kick. It caught her foot and set it down.

The three of us turned around and were greeted by a man with a large beard almost as big as the man and a woman carrying a staff

I was stunned into awe... wow. Stoick the Vast. The man who was king a few hours ago. He was accompanied by his Queen wife, Valka. I almost felt the need to bow to him... he did help people like us. The poor. The ones who needed help.

He was a respectable man, and he had certainly earned all of our respect.

He looked at the three of us, his height towering over us. I stopped dead in my tracks as they looked at us, "Gobbers assistants, aren't you?" He said, having all three of us revel in his perfect memory.

We nodded at him as he hefted an axe over his shoulder... swinging it and decapitating a charging soldier, "Good. We need skilled warriors at the moment. We need you all to help us quell this foe... and put Drago in chains." He said as he turned to his wife, watching her beat a soldier with her staff.

"Ingne!" she cried as the man suddenly caught on fire... and the Queen suddenly gained immense respect from me as a Mage. Not many Royals took part in learning it.

I stared at the two as Valka shook her head of smoke. They both looked to us, as if asking our input. I swallowed the lump in my throat and spoke up

"Well then, the first thing we should be doing is fighting Drago. If we beat him, the Dragon won't have a master and then will have no

reason to stay here." I pointed out. Valka spoke up now, "Then it will just wildly rampage. If we defeat the dragon, Drago will have to foundation to stand on and will have no choice but to surrender." She noted

Both were fair points. Defeat the master or suicidally attack the dragon but in return, it would end the war.

Stoick looked between Valka and I... I felt true pressure. He was literally deciding whose casted dye was more logical. He looked at Rapunzel and Merida, "You two, go with my wife. Mage, you will come with me... where is Hiccup?" He asked.

I froze. I forgot we left him to fight the Man himself... near the Grand Hall. "He is currently fighting Drago..." I say.

His face suddenly contorted in anger and fear... which I hope was not directed at us. He turned toward his wife, who held a hand to her mouth, looking scarred.

She had every right... her son may be gone. Leaving Stoick to resume the throne.

He nodded at her, "I will save him if he can be saved, my love. Go try and quell the Dragon! If it gets too difficult I want all three of you to fall back. There is no reason to selflessly give your life today... there has been enough death already." He commented before turning back to me, "Take me to where you last saw my son."

I nodded and motioned for him to follow me into the great hall... where Drago and Hiccup had taken to fighting. He ran alongside me... his axe was dragging on the ground, "I'll kill him for this... I knew he couldn't be trusted." He said.

I wasn't sure what he referred to, not did I feel it was my place to ask him. I merely shut up and looked at the raging fire in front of the door to the great hall. I raised my staff, "Stay close, my King! Frazil!" I said as a swirling column of ice surrounded us as we walked through the flames.

We sprung into the room ready for battle as Toothless knocked Drago away from Hiccup... allowing the bleeding boy to grab his sword shakily. He stood and held it up as Toothless snapped at Drago, turning back to Hiccup to Growl and Hiss at his Spurs.

"Hiccup!" His father cried out, watching Drago and Hiccup toward him as Hiccup took advantage of his distraction and swing at him. Drago blocked and spun his sword away, kicking Hiccup back. Stoick and I rushed forward, brandishing our weapons at him. Drago starred at the three of us... his eyes glowing with fire... it matched that of the inferno around us.

Stoick spun his axe, "Its three versus one, Drago... its all over." He said... but the Dragon master just shrugged his armor clad shoulder, "oh no... now, its fun."* he said as I raised my staff, "Ingle!"

* * *

><p>"Come now, ladies. make haste!" Valka cried out as she let out a

cry, "Ventus!" And a razor sharp cut of air suddenly shot through the air and cut through a charging enemy. I felt odd... one minute saving lives. The next, I was fighting alongside the queen herself. She was a sight to behold... she almost didn't even need our help, it seemed. I let loose an arrow, catching a man in his chest and letting him drop.<p>

We didn't have time to stop for them.. I could hear the roar of the dragon from where I stood. As to how the castle hadn't come down yet was a miracle to me... one I was quite thankful for as I gave Punzie a look. Her dress and face were covered in various dirt and blood. I can imagine I looked similar. Valka let out another yell, "Oceana!"* And a blast of water erupted from her staff. She cursed as she jumped over another poor sap who had sought to challenge us.

"How hard is it to find one dragon?!" She said, adding a series of angry curses that would make the worlds strongest man blush. I didn't know a queen could think like that, let alone speak it. Punzie finally spoke up, "My Queen, is there a way outside? We may be searching for him in the wrong place!" She said, hoping not to incite her ire.

She turned back to us and nodded, "Good thinking. Come, my personal quarters are right by. And there may be some weapons to gather. You will need them." They say when royalty is generous, they do nothing short of give you the kingdom itself. If the situation had been pleasant, I would be overjoyed.

The thought of carrying royal weapons in our hands... it was amazing. She did a series of turns before rising to the top staircase and running up it... busting down the double doors to their royal chambers. Soldiers were literally tearing it apart... and I almost asked if there was an end to them... they just kept coming it seemed. But I was silenced by the Queen as she stepped forward, her hands coated in white energy.

"Get your filthy traitorous hands off my things! Potesstatem Miminesse!*" she called out as her hands flashed brightly... suddenly causing them all to grip their heads and fall to the ground, dead. Suddenly the queen faltered in her step as the spell finished. Punzie and I gave her a quick boost as Punzie channeled her own magic into her... helping her regain her strength.

She shook her head and nodded at Rapunzel, "Thank you dears, My Mind Break spell is one of my more powerful spells... it takes a lot out of me when I use it." She said, standing up and pretending she had never faltered at all. She quickly grabbed a few weapons on the shelf and handed them to us. To me she handed a gorgeous blackwood bow, sharp and almost glowing with power.

To Rapunzel she handed a much nicer dagger, smooth and shining.. with a small compartment in the pommel for something small... like poison. She looked at us in a moment of queenly kindness, "Those were my Grandmothers... take care of them. And use them to vanquish all of our-" the wall suddenly burst open with a dragons claw. Valka dived forward as the raking claw missed her. She growled and let loose a fireball "Ingne!" She cried as the monster looked into the room and roared at us. I was stricken as the wall came down to reveal the large monsters head.

Rapunzel was right. It was scaling the walls. And now it was angry... looking at us. Valka looked at us, "Move on my command..." she said as we stood completely still. The Dragon was growling in a soft terrifying way. It suddenly opened its maw, "Move!" She said as the two of us dodged to separate quarters of the bed room as she yelled, "Frigor!" And unleashed a huge column of ice magic to meet the monster's fire. I couldn't simply stand here while the queen did all the fighting.

Punzie nodded at me as I drew the string back with an arrow notched. I took aim with the beautiful bow and shot forward. And scored a bullseye. Literally, I struck the Dragon in its eye as its head reeled back in pure fury as Valka continued her assault on the monster... but it seemed to no longer pay us much mind. It clawed at the air with its now one eye... it smashed through the side of the castle and brought the wall down.

We finally saw the wreckage. Almost fifty percent of the castle itself was downed rubble while the rest was damaged and on its way to being the same. Valka looked down as she saw her family standing off with Drago... it was far away but you could clearly see them. She watched the dragon flail for a moment longer before she motioned for us to follow her... we needed to get back down to the fight.

* * *

><p>He was far more cunning than I gave him credit for. And more of a warrior than my father or I. He was easily repelling the lot of us. His armor was impenetrable. It seemed the only area to protect was his face... which he had mastered almost completely. His dragon skin cloak defended him from Jack's magic and his skill with a spear was powerful enough for us to both be exhausted.<p>

"Don't you all realize you cannot defeat me?" He said, smiling evilly, "I have the dragon. I have all the power I need. You cannot even defeat me. How do you plan to fight that?" He said nodding at his monster. I raised my sword, "I plan to fight it until one of us dies!" I said, lunging at him only to have him parry my strike.

Drago just laughed and pushed me away, "I grow tired of this. You obviously won't give up... and I can't have you live any more..." he suddenly began swinging his spear over his head. We backed off as he began screaming at the top of his lungs... I had begun to think he had truly lost what remained of his mind as I suddenly realized a roar returned his own. And a dragon claw was coming directly for us... for me.

My father cried my name and shoved me as hard as he could... allowing the Dragon to grab him instead. I screamed for him in return... but the monster simply smashed him onto the ground... and taking the life from him.

An earth shattering shriek came from the entrance. "Stoick!" She said as she fired a burst of ice at the Dragon and Drago. The beast let him go and continued his rampage as the three ladies joined us... I stood. I was absolutely furious... this man... he had officially unlocked my rage. I stood to battle him once more... in vengeance for my father.

Drago chuckled, "Well, I think I have delivered a swift blow here... I certainly cannot take all five of you." he smiled at my father's lifeless body, "It will be more satisfying to watch you foolishly try to meet me in the battlefield." She began screaming again as he suddenly produced a small container... he threw it and it exploded into a bang... we covered our eyes... only to watch Drago escape on his winged beast...

He turned to me before flying away. "Good luck. You'll need nothing short of the gods themselves." I turned down as he flew from sight... everyone looking at me... as I looked at my father. That made three times I proved to be an unfit ruler. That meant I was officially out.

* * *

><p>Well, there is your fourth chapter! Once again, sorry for the delay. I plan to get the next one out in a couple of days. Tuesday at the latest. Also, sorry this chapter was mostly battle... but I had so many things to cover.

**Like Stoicks tragic passing... I had to work that in somewhere to Remain true to the universe. **

**Anywho, onto authors notes. **

**1*- an emblem is merely a symbol that is used to mark someone. It distinguishes who is who. **

**2*- Any of those Spell names are from one of three places. Dragons Dogma, Latin Language, or the game White Knight Chronicles. **

**3*- Yes... I stole that from Mass effect. **

Anywho, I hope you all appreciate the update. Remember to review and follow. It motivates me to give you more. Until next time.

5. Chapter 5

Checkmate 5

**There is truly no excuse for the long delay since I am still so into this. **

I had some issues with continuation... but I'm glad to say I am back with Chapter 5!

Reviews will be answered next chapter! Which will be out much faster!

**Disclaimer: Disney and Dreamworks own my Fandoms. My Fandoms own me. I own a lawyer. She tells me Diney and Dreamworks don't care what I own as long as it is not money. **

**Warning: This story may contain violence and sexy stuff... maybe. This may not be appropriate for all readers (Please stay anyway.) **

****Note: If you see an asterisk, aka *, that means the AN's at the end of the story may clarify any confusing parts.****

****Remember to Review and Favorite!****

****Now, with no more delay...****

****Here is Chapter 5 of Checkmate. ****

*** * ***

><p>I felt so numb... and I had felt this way for two days... two days prior my home, my bride, my own father... and a bit of my kingdom were yanked from me. I wasn't dealing with riots, as most of the civillian quarters were left untouched... but the city was uneasy. Painfully attentive of my next move.<p>

I had no clue. How do you recover from such a thing? A dragon... driven by a man determined to destroy you. He had laid all his cards on the table while I folded in shame... I felt truly unworthy of the crown. Dad would have mobilized. Gathered our Armies and taken it straight to the bastards door and broke it down. Yet, I simply lay here.

The caste was in complete ruins. It left my family little to no choice... while repairs and funerals were to me had, Mother and I were currently at Gobber's, under incredibly heavy guard. It wasn't everyday that nobility had to sleep under a commoners roof... no one was to take any chances with us. I may feel unfit as a king, but I am the only one remaining.

I had to appraciate his hospitality and willingness to accept us into his home... even if it was only for a short while. He was a family friend, however, so I felt bad for expecting less than such.

I felt so weak. Helpless, lost in my own grief that I couldn't even help myself much less my own people. It was pathetic.

I could hardly gain the strength to raise from my bed... I felt this conflict of pain, stress, guilt and pure agony wracking my body. My muscles screamed at me to move... but my heart ached too much to try... and my head was far too heavy from my thoughts. Worried over my mother, pained over my father... and unsure whether the people wanted me as their leader.

So instead I laid in the guest bed... starring at the bedside candle, contemplating what I needed to do while I was in my small clothes.

I had played a few scenarios in my head... unsure what to do. War was my initial thought, and it wasn't a completely wrong option. Drago had thought himself well enough to assault my home... twas only fair that I should retaliate.

But then I remembered that we had lost enough lives with senseless battle. So, War was out of the question without half a nation of soldiers at my back... and as for right now, most of the country was recovering from a Dragon attack whether or not they took any looses... but I couldn't sit back and do nothing, I couldn't forgive myself for such an attrocity. I had to attone for the losses and verify the faith in my people.

Nothing didn't bring me Drago's head on a platter... that was for sure. I had remembered my father's face when the thought of war was considered.

I was a hurt son who had lost his father, even if I was the king. My birthday had been so perfect until then. I had made friends, battled and experienced the life of an adventurer... I had met my bride, who felt similarly to my views on this marriage garbage and was willing to move on and allow me to take my own lover.

Speaking of Astrid... She has currently returned to her homeland to help prepare war assets to help in the war... and I was eternally grateful to accept her as an ally and a friend.

Sadly after this, I officially declared the marriage off. It was not happening now, and I was well within my rights. No one would question that order. I had far too much on my plate to worry about siring an heir.

I rolled over as my door opened to reveal a familiar white haired mage. Jack bit his lip as he brought me some food... his eyes glistening blue with sympathy as he sat down the tray. This was the first time he had been in my room... and the first time another had seen me in my small clothes, disregarding my family.

Yet I couldn't bring myself to mind it... I nodded at him in thanks for food I wasn't going to eat, most likely. He shook his head, "Your mother the Queen asked me to ensure you ate something..." he said sitting down, pushing the tray toward me "Thank you, but it is unneeded." I said as I turned my head. Yet he continued to push it forward, determined.

"I'm not hungry..." I tried as he pushed it again, "Don't care. The Queen's orders were to feed you if need be... and I was okay with doing so." he said as I felt my cheeks dust over with pink as I picked up some soup and drank, attempting to appease him... the thought of Jack's fingers slipping into my mouth was... embarrassing and... a bit arousing to say the least.

I mean... There was no policy against homosexual relationships in my Kingdom. Love was a celebration of two souls who loved each other. It wasn't that I didn't believe that men or women can't mate with the same gender... oh, Gods, why did I say mate? I'm not even going to entertain the thought of it. Not with a man I just met.

But... I had never contemplated being with another man, not that I was ever given the option. But now I had them. Now that the world was my oyster... I didn't find the option... unsatisfying. He was... quite a man. Jack was handsome, strong, comedic. And powerful.

But that was a thought for another day. No need to pursue something even I was unsure of.

"You can't stay here forever Hiccup. These people need a leader... and last I checked, that was still who you are. You are the King, and despite your adversities, you have to be strong and rise above... and that sounds totally asinine." He said, fingers threading in his hair.

"And rehearsed." I quipped as he smiled, "Stab wound to the pride. How melodramatic." He said as he sighed, "But its not wrong... you are the man in charge... and you have me behind you."

I think the both of us thought the same thing at that moment... both of our faces set upon with red... and it didn't help that only my loincloth adorned me...

"I didn't mean it like that... you know? I mean I support you. Rapunzel and Merida also support you... and you may not believe it, but so do your people. They're simply scared... they need their king with them... preparing a defense to set his people at ease."

I nodded, "I know... its just... difficult." I said as I began reaching for my clothes and armor. He smiled, "If it were easy... everyone would be royal. Guess being a King isn't all its cracked up to be." He said as I nodded, "More than you may ever know..." I said as I examined my undamaged armor and sword.

"Tell my mother to sound the town bell... and be ready to convene in the center of town with the others. We have work to do... get ready for it." I said, unwilling to reveal the plan forming in my head.

Jack stood up, excited as he ran for the door, and turned to me before bounding out of the room, "We will be ready, Hiccup... and by the way..." he said as he stood in the doorway.

I turned toward him as I strapped my leg armor on. He gave me a wicked smile, "Don't lie to us... friends don't need to do that. And friends won't treat you differently."

I smiled, "I will remember that." And I swore to myself that I would as I attached my sword to my side. I would need their trust completely for this plan.

* * *

><p>I've never seen the capital this busy... but I swear, everyone was here. And their uncle. I felt... oddly important. In defending the castle during the dragon incursion, the Queen officially declared us... honorary knights in service to their royal Monarchy.<p>

It was a title that allowed us permanent passage through the castle and was generally amazing. She and I got along famously. It wasn't often you meet mages these days... so we had a lot to discuss concerning magical experiences and augments that helped us and trading secrets.

Yet now she had very little to say... this was her sons first address to the people, and it was causing her to remember the horrors, as she was trying to repress them by making a friendship with me. I felt awful for the both of them.

Hiccup had yet to show up... leaving The Queen up here with Merida, Punzie and I... the three of us receiving odd stares from just about everyone.

The crowd itself was agasp with whispers, rumors, and heresay. Some about the King, some about us... but all regarded us and the incident

at the castle, which was currently under reconstruction until it was livable once again.

I picked at my fingernails, anxious to hear what Hiccup had up his sleeve for retaliation... which everyone agreed would not be war... yet. He had few allies that were even remotely prepared for battle... especially against a dragon.

And then, he appeared, on foot as he walked through the crowd, watching it part with his steps as he took up a spot in the center of town. He had on his armor and Toothless was at his feet, calm and quiet as Hiccup kept his eyes trained on the ground.

I suppose no one expected him to yell his first word, which made everyone jump in surprise. "So! I don't need to be a genius to see my people are afraid... because I can sympathize. I'm terrified." He said as he looked to us

"But my emotions are irrelevant on the matter... because more so than fear... I feel anger. I feel vengeful... I feel a debt in my life is owed."

"Some lesser lord thought himself well enough to ride a monster into my castle and call me a coward! Say that my family was weak?! A man whose pitiful army couldn't handle six people? He says we are the weak ones, but what man needs a Dragon to beat me if his army is good enough? He is not a man nor is he worthy of his title! He is a coward who murdered your former king, my father! And you know what? I will not let insult stand!" He said, the crowd growing... excited at his passion.

"I know you may not be ready yet. May not be ready to sacrifice yourself in the name of your home. The rest of the country feels as you do! But I do see a group Of extraordinary people who are willing to join me! To ready the country for war... the three beside me, whom I have known not for very long but feel as though destiny has brought us together to prepare for this battle. And the four of us shall travel to each city and we will build our army from the ground up, should we have to. I hereby declare that any who are willing and able join the city army to train for the war. You will be knighted and receive soldier pay. As for those unwilling or unable, there will be caravans outside the city to take you somewhere safe... while we ensure the country stays as it is!"

He stood tall proud as his people corraled around him, "We of Berk will fight as one! And together, we will stop this incursion! And bring Drago the justice he deserves!"

I had to admit... it had us on our feet, cheering for him. He spoke so confidently... and he even made us a part of it. I see why he wanted us here in the first place. If he wanted us in battle, we were there.

We were finally going to get that chance to become legendary adventurers. I felt a swell of pride in my chest as Merida and Rapunzel were filled with excitement, holding hands and being... excited women.

I smiled as Hiccup approached us, "You will give me a hand right? I don't know if I could fight without you guys... there are still so

many things to learn about adventuring and..."

"Absolutely. We back you 100 percent." I said as he smiled at me... bashful. And looking quite adorable... I smiled as his mother greeted us.

"I suppose it was inevitable... you always had an adventurous mindset. But I agree, the country needs reassurance in its unity before we go knocking on Drago's door." She said, taking her sons hands, "He would be so proud of you... so, do what you need to do. I will prepare a knapsack and... send you on your way." She said, tears slipping down her face, "No matter what, never lose faith. You will need it to win against that bastard." She said as she turned to call out some orders, which were quickly completed under her direct order.

It was insane... we were going to be adventurers. It was a real journey... and the more I thought of it, I realized it was one that could not be failed.

"And another one to you, Dad..." I said as I finished another spot of wine... which proved to be delicious since it was quite old... perks of living in the winery until the morning was... nice.

I suppose this was my last hurrah before tomorrow. My little birthday treat to me... and I felt my head swim a bit. Pleasantly, though. I wanted to be a little intoxicated before the morning came... and I was forced to leave my life behind.

I poured another glass as the backdoor opened to reveal Jack, carrying a loaf of bread and another glass. I smiled and poured him a glass as he sat beside me on the bench.

"Want a bit of bread? Might help with the alcohol poisoning." He said as I laughed, "Perhaps later... I just... want to be happy and drunk right now." I said as he raised his glass for a drink, "Cheers to that." He said as he gulped back the sweet wine.

"I guess you're like us, huh? Too excited to sleep?" He said, looking at me... and I nodded in response. "I guess I got my wish after all... I wanted to... find adventure on my own. Who knew it would come so... harshly." I said, taking another drink and reaching for a slice of warm bread.

"In the world, what you want is always denied you, and upon reception of your desire, pain and consequences follow. It makes you question if it's really worth it." He said, munching on his own bread.

I sighed as I swallowed mine. "That's a wise proverb to know... wish I had known it. My family may still be alive." I said as I reached for the bread... and I felt cold digits... yet I made no move to remove them... instead intertwining our fingers...

His fingers squeezed a bit as he continued, "Life had its plan for this before you were a thought, Hiccup... that's why they call it fate and not... fiction?" He said.

I ran my free hand through my hair, "How droll, the thought of all life just being the thought of fiction..." I said as I laid my head back... fingers cooling off in his... but the both of us held

strong... for some reason.

I felt as though we both needed the comfort... and it was nice. I felt as though I was warming his cold hand.

"You know, fiction can teach us a lot of important lessons. I'm reminded of one of my favorite tales... want to hear it?" He asked as he drained his glass, not daring to move his hand for another drink.

"I enjoy listening to you talk... a story would be nice." I said, honestly. He smiled, "I enjoy a man willing to speak his mind." He said as he cleared his throat.

"There was once a beautiful princess who went by the name of Alexandra. She was the daughter of a prominent lord, and the desire of any who were lucky enough to capture her essence." He said as I smiled, "Does this story contain unicorns too?" I said as he laughed.

"This is my story, now." He said as he continued, "Alexandra had many many suitors, all fair and proper lords and ladies. But she spurned their advances, for she did not love them.

"Her love truly lied with a man who was a soldier that was standing outside her window and was lucky enough to catch her singing out... and he caught her eye, and they fell in love, obviously.

"However their love had to remain secret... for she was a princess, and he a common soldier. It was scandalous. The two had to meet in secret."

"But it didn't last, did it?" I said, smiling he squeezed my hand. "Have you heard this story?" He asked, chuckling.

"You're right. Her father inevitably caught them, and in doing so, he sent the soldier to war... and broke Alexandra's heart. Not even a month past before she discovered her soldier had perished in battle... and she was broken. She was locked in her tower where she cried and cried, forsaking the gods.

"'Why?' She cried, 'Why did my love have to be taken from me? Why would you do this?' And so earnest was her plea, that the gods themselves lifted her to the stars and she joined them... crying a river of tears to her soldier... and it is said that when Alexandra cries enough, she will be able to cross the sea, and be reunited with her soldier." He said, finishing.

"So no happy ending?" I asked, sighing as I stared at the stars. He shook his head, "It's metaphorical for what we just discussed. Things we want... pain following blah blah blah..." he said as he undid our fingers.

"We have a busy day tomorrow... we should get some rest." He said, rubbing his hand, "This was lovely... so we should do it again?"

I stood on shaky legs and smiled at him, "We will... very soon."

* * *

><p>There is your fifth update! I apologize for the delay!

****Please review and follow!****

6. Chapter 6

****Checkmate 6****

****So, heres the next chapter. I need to thank the fans of this. You make this story great! ****

****Remember to review and follow. Its a great motovation technique. Also, I will be editing in review responses. I had some difficulties. Please be patient.****

****Legalities. ****

****Disclaimer: Disney and Dreamworks own my Fandoms. My Fandoms own me. I own a Lawyer. She says Disney and Dreamworks don't care what I own as long as it isn't money. ****

****Warning: This story contains some M rated content. If this displeases you, this may not be the story for you. (Please stay anyway.) ****

****Note: Spot an asterisk, aka *, check the authors notes. It may clear up any confusion.****

****Onto chapter 6****

Hiccup.

It had been the second time in a week that I had seen the outside of my kingdom. Each opportunity under unique circunstances. This... this one was much worse a circunstance.

Standing here and watching the doors open, half the city watching our backs as the wind rushed past the enormous gates, it was hard to believe we were leaving to amass an army.

We had set a number of travel routes, and hunting, task and monsters not withstanding, we had safely assumed the trip was going to be a good few months to even a year.

I can never truly wrap my head around leaving for such a copious amount of time. Its not that I feel its a foolish move, because I know for a fact that Drago is not the type to attack a downed enemy... not until he stands up to fight again. But mostly because of my hearts desire to remain near home when my people need me.

I still hold strong ties here. My mother, who is an emotional wreck at the whole idea of my leaving home at this time, has agreed to keep a company of close advisors at hand while she handles problems at home. That was her job, and I could be content with her overtaking it in my place

But in the end, this is my home and its hard to leave it behind. However, it would be even more difficult to continue living as if

there was no problem. Ignoring the tiger won't stop it from eating you... Drago was the tiger and I the innocent man starring the beast down. Eventually, Drago would come back and force a reaction, retortion or something from me. We decided to face it prepared. He sparred me once. He won't be that 'Generous' twice.

The four of us regarded each other as we took our first steps and allowing the gates to close, standing still the entire time that they closed, the same wind gusting behind us.

The gates had closed with a slam and the four of us stood on the precipice of our journey only allowed the barest necessities. We were allowed food, water, a map, a symbol of my kingdom so people could distinguish me as their king, and our weapons and armor of course. The breeze was light and cool. The sun was shining. Everything was this aura of calm. A pastoral setting if ever there had been one.

It was almost criminal for the world to be this beautiful, in light of all that has happened.

You would almost assume nothing had happened three days prior and the attack was just a cold nightmare that I would wake up from any moment. But it wasn't... which made my heart ache.

I sighed and drew my compass and map, setting about the course of the journey, taking into consideration the many options I had to choose from. Initially, we agreed the decision was mine.

"From what I have gathered, I predict that we have four allies we can call upon, excluding Astrids war efforts, which will be on hold for a while." I said as I set the compass down as a paperweight. The four of us were currently overlooking the thin paper.

"And the X's represent whose out, right?" Rapunzel asked to which I nodded in response. "Indeed. Various kingdoms are a waste of time due to lack of preparation or simply lack of support..." I said with a sigh. Merida spoke up, "So what is the plan and where do we hit first?"

"We shouldn't be predictable and go in a circle. We should head towards the furthest kingdoms and make our way back, so we can amass here."

"But that will dreadfully cut into time. We are on a limited amount. Traveling shorter distances will allow people to hear of our cause and wait for us to arrive." Rapunzel countered as I held up my hand.

"We have four places to go. Arindel, The Guardians Headquarters, The Stronghold and Hallowtown*." I said before I was interrupted.

"Hallowtown? You want to go see those crazy Necromancers?" Jack said, shivering at the idea of it all. I could understand that. Relations with Hallowtown and its residents had been strained in recent years, if the dark whispers all over the kingdom were signs pointing toward such.

The rumor was that the entirety of the town were Necromancers. Magery in its entirety was legal and well, as My own mother practiced, but

Necromancy was... frowned upon.

"Either we talk to them or Drago does. The decision isn't an easy one, but in the case of them as a foe or ally, I would prefer them as an ally." I said as I turned my attention to Arindel.

"It's the closest. I have to agree with Punzie. I would much rather let our presence be known immediately. Or as fast as possible." I said as the three nodded, eager to get a move on with this.

I turned my head and folded the map as we start out on a swift pass north. I spotted a small Boggart and let it taste my blade. As I watched it fall to the ground, I knew this... this was my real calling.

Jack. (Week 1)

Simple tasks were quickly becoming difficult for the four of us, taking right now as an example. "Frigor!" I cried out as a Vespids wing got caught in the icy blast, sending it toppling.

I had my staff in one arm, and an almost miniscule amount of firewood under my left. Apparently this wood was vastly important to these Vespids and they felt the sudden need to chase me down and kill me.

My magic was pretty strong but when I used it too much, it depleted my energy. And I used plenty earlier when a random Chimera came out of nowhere... it was moving much too fast until I froze its legs.

"Brontide!" I cried out as I turned the Vespids Wasp into a ice sculpture, and sat on the ground, my magic feeling pretty wiped. The day had taken a pretty good chunk out of us. Well, strike that. The entire week had been rough. Simple gatherings for firewood were becoming fights to the death.

Yet at the same time, it's become easier with time. Sure, we're tired and dirty but we're still basking in the glow of being adventurers. Casting off the reins of our lives and living free on the road... ignoring the fact that this trip was of possibly great importance.

Yet none of us saw ourselves as three people traveling with the King, but just four friends who go together really well. And we do, we laugh a lot when we aren't discussing war plans, we conquer foes together and our skills are cohesive. Any bases that need covered are covered.

I returned to our small camp, and smiled when I saw a few empty soup bowls laying about and Punzie and Merida passed our near the fire. I sighed at Hiccup and sat down.

"Too dangerous to go out alone these days, it seems. Sorry that's all I could get..." I said as he nodded, "I can't blame you. You can't walk ten feet without meeting a monster it seems." He said, scratching Toothless' neck.

I smiled and let my hand rest on his again... which he and I had been doing quite a bit of since that night we got a little drunk. His

fingers were so warm in mine, which I knew were frigid as the ice they conjured. But if it bothered him I didn't know it.

"Is this normal?" He asked, a hushed tone to his voice. I looked down at him ever so slightly, the fire dancing off his beautiful green eyes. I smiled, "Only if you make it anything but." I said as he squeezed a bit tighter.

"It's just... all my life I was told I had to lie with a woman to make an heir but I never wanted that high life of regality, despite being the royal son himself..." he said, looking a bit glum.

"I'd guess that is why you lied to us in the first place?" I asked, remembering my initial anger, though only brief, when I had discovered his role in our home. He nodded.

"You were the first people to ever treat me as if I were just somebody else. Not some... special being that required worship to acknowledge you." He said.

I smiled at him, "So tell me then... you didn't want a wife and title... what do you want then? Do you even know?" I asked, and I was genuinely curious. Hiccup seemed... interested. But in the same sentence, I don't want to persuade him into something he may not understand.

He and I came from a kingdom that celebrated love of all kinds, so I know our relationship would not be entirely scandalous, if you overlooked the King's duty to the throne.

"This. This life on the road was all I ever wanted. My closest friends and I tramping the roads and seeking our fortune. A life of excitement. I never wanted the title... but if I could change fate, I would rather my father still be alive and well... I didn't want to do this for such a horrifying reason." He said, looking down.

I suddenly felt his hair, soft and scented with lavender, resting upon my shoulder. I removed my hand from his to twirl the soft locks in my fingers. "We will stop him, you know?" I assured him as felt his breath slow.

'The guy can sleep anywhere' I thought to myself as I layed his head on my lap, allowing to get as comfortable as he could in the forest...and I allowed the hypnotic dance of the flames to overtake me as well.

I hadn't even realized I myself had fallen asleep until I was getting a tap of the shoulder. I assumed it was Punzie waking me up and preparing to scold and or tease me for falling asleep on watch.

It was then, I noticed that it was no finger tapping me...but something much much pointier. Like the tip of a spear. I immediately opened my eyes to strike with a spell but my mouth was clamped shut as I took in the face of our Attackers.

It was a group of bandits... looming over me and my friends, all of us were bound and tied up. I knew I should have tried harder to stay awake... now we were paying for it.

I thrashed about as I violently tried to free my bound mouth, so I

could cast one spell... something to get us an advantage... with no hands or voice, I was utterly useless.

All of us were desperately searching around, trying to find some means of escape... but I saw nothing that wouldn't result in someone getting shot or stabbed.

"Weapons down men... if my eyes aren't deceiving me, that captive will be better off to us alive." He said pointing to Hiccup. "Well, my leige. It is an honor to meet you. Though I must say you probably wish it were under better circumstances?" Said a man stepping out of the crowd. Unlike the others, the man was handsome, and obviously was intelligent. At least more so than his brutish thug followers. "I'm Flynn Rider. Leader around these parts." He said as Hiccup has his mough gag removed. "And what exactly is your perogitive with me? Are you behind on current events, you cutthroat?" He said as Flynn suddenly produced something I saw soldiers start carrying... a gun.*

"Maybe Atlas* here can answer that for you?" He asked, pointing it at his arm... "Keep the back talk down... this is my hostage situation." He said as Hiccup shut up.

"I heard about the Dragon attack. I also know what power kings have. How much they can give to others... when they feel generous."

"My kingdom is in no shape to support ourselves, much less the bandits that plague her forests. I'm much more useful to you as an ally instead of a hostage."

Flynn just laughed, as if he were some jester performing for his court. "Damn, turning my words against me. Guess you royals are just a bunch of silver tongues huh?" He said as he looked at him again, "See, I wish I could believe you, but I get the feeling that the moment I set you free you're gonna lunge for those weapons of yours and try to fight back... which means I gotta kill you. I can't do that."

Hiccup groaned in defeat at this loss... we were unsure what to do at this point... we were trapped.

And we had no clear way out.

Hiccup. (Week 2)

Three bloody days. Thats how long we've been at this camp. I wasn't sure its exact location without the map and compass but I knew it veeref us off course and off schedule a good mile or two.

Although, for being prisoners, we could have been treated worse. We get hot meals, 2 small caravan trailers with beds. We just couldn't leave excluding bath time.

And I hate to admit it, but the place was a charming little hamlet in the midst of the wilderness. There was music and dancing and was generally your average happy home.

Why a leader of a band of cutthroats lived in such a place was baffaling. What was even more confusing was why no ransoms seem to be made. Nor had they killed us. We're they biding their time? Waiting

on news of their missing king to arrive on the wind?

The door to my caravan suddenly opened to reveal a gruff looking man with Biceps bigger than my head. He chewed on a piece of... what appeared to be a twig, oddly enough.

"Flynn wants to see you lot. And he wants the mage gagged." He said as Jack growled at the thought of having his mouth stuffed with indiscernable fabrics again. I gave him a knowing stare...if they can be our allies, I would have them.

It seems foolish to allow the courtesy and deny the punishment of kidnapping the king himself, but I refuse to allow these circumstances to take away my reason and ability to trust. Were I in their shoes, would I not do the same?

Jack allowed his mouth to be tied shut as we were lead out and toward the biggest caravan in the villiage. It was of the same quality as the others, so it was enlightening to see the leader didn't allow himself too many higher pleasures while his people rot.

The door opened to reveal the man who had taken us hostage nodding at us. He still had his gun, Atlas, strapped to his hip. He looked up from the table he was looking over, adorned with several sticks with colored flags, and nodded, "Nice to see my captives are adjusting well." He said, walking around to stare at us, "You know bloody well that we aren't adjusted. The only thing we've done is sit in your caravan and waste time." Merida said as she fought against her bindings, only further damaging her wrists.

Flynn laughed at her as if she told a joke, "I know. I just try to make light of the situation." He said, turning back to the table.

"Theres hardly anything to make light of in a hostage situation." Rapunzel said, her blonde hair falling a bit in her face. He shrugged, "Very untrue, we can make light of the food or the atmosphere or-" he said as I finally interrupted with, "We've been here for three days. Are you going to tell us what you want already?"

"Aside from the price on your head, what makes you think I need anything from you?" He said. I starred at him as if he were an idiot. "Why else would we be here? If all you desired was my ransom, then you would just keep me locked up."

"Fair point. And you are correct. You see, you all want to leave and I understand that. But what exactly does that gain me? Release them... at the premise they won't attack." Flynn said as the men drew knives and prepared to finally slice our bindings.

I nodded, "Just let us go and I promise we won't attack." I said as our binds were sliced and Toothless had his muzzle unlocked. Flynn smiled and removed his hand from Atlas. "Good to see people who keep their end of the bargain. Now, I am willing to let you go, but in return for a favor that needs taken care of."

"Oh Joy, not only do we get to be your captives but also your couriers?" Jack said, crossing his arms, seemingly satisfied to have his hands free... and I was thankful he didn't flash freeze them.

"I could just tie you back up if thats an issue..." Flynn said in a more serious tone than I ever saw him speak in, "I'll keep this simple. You and your group will be more than welcome to take leave and continue on your journey. But there is one cost. A rival of mine needs taken down. One who is far less merciful than I am."

"Thats a surprise." Rapunzel said, crossing her arms and wincing at the pain in her wrists. Flynn shrugged, "I tied you up and gave you a furnished caravans. He would just give you a bed of straw and a collar. And if you spoke to him like you speak to me... your corpse would be used as an obedience tool, strung up from the trees." Flynn said as I visibly shuddered, "Who is this man, Rider?" I asked as the thought of dead hung corpses plagued my thoughts.

"He's a man who goes by the name Arit. Son of Arit*, the original bandit king. Hes sort of the heir to his throne. Took it over and threw out his old practices. When his father was in power, trade between our groups flowed happily, raids were successful and death rates were low.

"But when his son took over after his death, trade routes ended, rape and death were so common, it was to be expected. I am a man who prefers to intimidate. Dead men make useless resources." He said.

I scowled, "You're both just monsters. He may be a murderer, but you're just an extortionist." I said as he shrugged yet again, "Maybe, but we can both agree who the lesser of two evils is. He would kill you. I give you a chance to get away in return to help you."

"And how do we know you'll fulfill your end of the bargain?" Merida asjed as Flynn suddenly removed Atlas from his hip, removed the power and bullet from it and held it out, "As an act of faith, you can carry Atlas on you."

"And how do you know we won't run away?" Rapunzel asked. Flynn just smiled, "I haven't removed the leash from your pet, have I?" He said as he stroked Toothless' ear, which he seemed to actually enjoy, "He stays here. If you run, I'll kill him. Point blank. Thats my deal. Take it or go back."

I looked at my pet, with his shining eyes and dog like demeanor. I saw Flynn's eyes. He would do it. I couldn't choose between my life and Toothless. I nodded in agreement.

"Deal. Give us our weapons and directions and he will be dealt with."

I could only hope this turned out like I hoped it would.

So, next chapter is set to be another violent one. Hope you're as excited to read it as I am to write it!

Asterisk notes.

**1. - Hallowtown **

If you can tell me what the reference is, I will put you in as a side character.

****2. - Guns****

****This is pre Industrial age. Guns were just starting to become common place.****

****3. - Atlas****

****Atlas is the name of the Greek Titan who held up the sky. I thought it would be a wicked name for a gun.****

****4. - Arit as a villain****

****I like Arit (I think that's how it's spelled) but I need more Antagonists compared to Protagonists. Sorry if you like him...****

****Remember to review and follow me. ****

****Until next time.****

7. Chapter 7

****Checkmate seven****

****Well, here we are at Chapter Seven, which is coming out much earlier than planned. ****

****To all that answered the question last chapter, yes it is Halloween Town from The Nightmare Before Christmas. ****

****But I should have been more specific. The first person to answer the question gets the side character. That spot was given to Maximus Potter. ****

****They are no longer qualified to guess for side character roles. Oh, didn't I mention that? There will be more! So don't count yourself out yet. Keep an eye out for those opportunities. ****

****Now, I promised to respond to reviews a few chapters ago... but phone difficulties have prevented me from doing so. So I will answer them now.****

****Raffs - back in those days, you could drink at 18. But I did enjoy writing that scene.****

****ZenaraTheDragon - I figured it wasn't. And I will begin doing so, as you can see. And at times I forget about Toothless. I forget he's just as much of Hiccup as Hiccup himself is I suppose.****

****Hiccafrost - Thank you. ****

****Maximus Potter - I realized the spelling was off. It will be corrected this chapter. And congratulations on winning the spot.****

****SaraNekoChan - Not Corpse Bride. Yes to NBC and No to Percy Jackson. You had it right one time. And that is sort of the feel I**

get with it to, being the huge DNDer I am.**

Hazel1706: Well, this is half a Hijack story. But you're right. I wanted to focus on something bigger instead of everyone else who haphazardly throw the two into a 'Coming-out' story where the romance feels forced and unnatural. This one has natural development while not being entirely focused on it. That was my goal.

**Guest - Yes it is. **

Guest 2 - Its right. But try again. Too late now.

**So there are the reviews I promised. **

**Keep an eye out for more of those opportunities if you want to be involved a bit in the story. **

Legal Time.

**Disclaimer: Disney and Dreamworks own my Fandoms. My Fandoms own me. I own a Lawyer. She says Disney and Dreamworks don't care what I own as long as it isn't money. **

**Warning: This story contains M Rated Content. If this bothers you, this story may not be the one for you. (Though I wish it were.) **

**Note: If you spot an asterisk, aka *, check the Authors notes. May clear up any confusion or questions. **

**Onto Chapter Seven. **

Hiccup. (Week 2)

The morning arrived quite abruptly... even more so than I would have liked, despite being the early riser. A fist came pounding on our caravan in the small hours of the morning, causing me and Jack to spring up with a shout.

After She forcibly opened it and Jack had formed a few Icicles to form on the ceiling with a stay blast of magic, we calned down and were face to face with a woman. Neither of which was Rapunzel nor Merida.

Jack and I starred in surprise at our intruder... shadows casting over her figure as our eyes adjusted to the early dawn light

Her features were sharp and there were no notable blemishes on her face, so you could certainly say she was an attractive woman.

Despite living among The Rabble, she, like Flynn, had immaculate hygiene. And she also appeared refined and distinguished, like she belonged among the socialites in my kingdom... but she was here, dressed in bandit clothes and used bandit weapons.

Her hair was Reddish Brown and pulled away from her face. Auburn, I think it was. Her eyes were narrow and her lips drawn tight. She appeared like the exact opposite of Flynn. She looked composed and proper while he seemed laid back and carefree.

My heart finally stopped pounding as I let the breath I was holding drop from my chest as I looked her over from head to toe. "And who might you be?" I asked in half bewilderment and half fear.

"I'm Sarah. Flynn has tasked me to be your guide while we go find Arit." Were the first words that came to my ears upon spotting this rather forward woman. In my surprise and sleep induced stupor, I forgot that we were planning on outright destroying a bandit... an idea that I had been foolish to have accepted. However, as long as he had Toothless, I simply couldn't let myself walk away.

That evening I had currently been laying with Jack*, trying to keep cool in the night (Which seems counterproductive but was in fact quite the opposite), considering the marshlands we were in were hot and she simply walked in like it was her own home, although in this place, it very well may be.

We couldn't say these caravans were vacant entirely when we were thrown in them, so I suppose I shouldn't throw judgement one way or the other.

She had walked in on the two of us in a relaxed slumber at the crack of dawn. Despite our lower proximities being sheathed in clothing, I still jumped and attempted to cover myself.

It was rather awkward... but in this cramped caravan, Jack and I had been... nuzzling, I suppose you could say. Entirely innocent, I assure you. He was cold to the touch and I found it pleasant considering the environment we were in.

Though if Jack holding me at my waist bothered her, she didn't let it show. She had our weapons in hand and carried a mean looking set of arrows, complete with a beautifully carved bow, upon her back. She was dressed very simply. A Paupers style skirt, a lightly plated Cuirass of iron.

She handed me my sword and Jack his staff as we stood up and got our armor on. "Flynn informed me you would need these." She said.

She turned on her heels as we prepared our armor for the journey, "The girls are awake already. Make haste. We don't have forever." She said before leaving.

Jack grunted, "One of those 'All Business' types I see." He said, slipping on his Doublet before turning to me and nodding in confidence. We had discussed our plans last night...

However they didn't really come together that well. Flynn hadn't told us much about his strategies (I suppose that was what Sarah was around for) and we were left bumbling around a bunch of maybes. Nothing was solid, including the target.

I felt very... unsafe. Insecure in our abilities, even. This man sounds like he is truly mad... and is most likely unpredictable.

"So why exactly do we need a guide? I thought Flynn trusted us?" Jack asked as he adjusted his staff and walked outside with me, noting he had been elected/forced to carry Atlas on his person. Sarah merely glanced over her shoulder and said, "I am his right hand woman, Mage.

I don't understand why he trusts you as much as he is, but sending me with you shows that his trust knows no bounds." She said as Merida and Rapunzel joined the three... ready for a journey. We nodded at each other in greetings before falling in line with Sarah.

"How far away is this Erit fellow?" Merida asked as she adjusted her own bow. Sarah merely looked at her compass and considered the question while we watched.

A few moments of contemplation produced her answer, "A few hours if we move quickly and some monster doesn't decide to stop us... other than that, I can't say." Sarah said with a glint in her eyes that was barely distinguishable... as if this mission meant more to her than simply finding Erit.

But the moment I noticed it, it vanished under that mask of cool indifference. She adjusted her hair tie and looked back at us fully, "Follow me and stay ready." She said.

I allowed my flaming blade to spring to life as the four of us stepped tentatively behind Sarah.

We stepped into the marsh a bit, unthinkingly discover the marsh floors wet and mushed floor... it was getting in my boot. But Sarah simply kept moving on as if the mud and algae didn't bother her.

Toothless nudged me, whining a bit at the nasty marshlands. I pet his head and whispered, "It's not like bed back home but we gotta keep moving." I said as he seemed to have renewed energy before trotting to the front and scanning the area.

"So... tell us about yourself Sarah?" Rapunzel said... and despite having a usually flawless silver tongue, it seemed to fail her in this moment, making her perfectly innocent question come out awkward and garrish.

"No." She said simply... letting us know that we were to not question her any further.

I bit my lip and began contemplating Jack and I's conversation the previous night. It had been directly after Flynn had sent us to bed with some food... he seemed... irritated with the situation... or possibly just me for dealing with a bandit.

He munched his stew and stared at the bowl... utterly in silence in my presence, which was quite the opposite considering we usually had plenty to say.

"I hate this Hiccup..." he said finally. "That bastard is just using us and we all know it. He'll most likely kill us the minute Arit is dead. He'll trail behind us or something..." Jack said, finally voicing his opinion.

"If Flynn wanted us dead, I doubt he would go through all this roundabout just to kill us later. I know bandits can be cruel but he has yet to get really violent." I noted, setting my bowl down.

He drained his bowl and leaned back, "Hiccup...?" He said, tone changing as he addressed me specifically. I looked up to see those

brown iris' with just a touch of icy blue starring at me, "Can I hug you?" He asked.

It was such a simple and innocent request... and yet I felt my cheeks heat at the thought of his arms... enveloping me. However, I was no pansy... and so I let his cool arms wrap my torso and allowed him to lay my head on his shoulder as I took in his very unique features.

He was muscled... very much so. His build was only ever so slightly bigger than my own... and was cool. Not freezing. But not warm at the same time.

His scent was surprisingly strong despite the lack of baths we had been taking... which I had chalked up to his body temperature...

He smelled of mint. Freshly pulled and fairly reminiscent of long forgotten winters... he smelled like that... and it was lovely... so lovely it was lulling me to slumber.

I felt him lift me to the straw bed as his lips grazed the crown of my head... and he whispered, "Sleep tight Hic..."

I had factored in a possible betrayal by Flynn... after forgetting Jack's wonderful sleeping patterns. And he and I agreed that we would keep a close eye out in case... Jack was authorized to flash freeze him if he tried...

I turned my attention back to the marsh as I felt the temperature suddenly drop.

Jack

This place was not natural. Back at the Gypsy camp, it was easily 80 degrees but after traveling a mile into the marsh, it cannot be any more than fifty. It was scary

I swear this place threw caution at mother nature and just didn't follow it. The weather patterns had changed in, literally, instants. This place was a wet land but a few hours prior, it was a steam pit that made even me hot. To top off that, now an ominous fog was setting in that was colder than even I was.

Our guide hadn't said much to us after our departure, other than the occasional grunt when we spotted something and she dispatched it quietly. Something she almost seemed to relish. Relish the kill or... something else undistinguishable.

The only thing more irritating than the variable weather was the tremendous amount of time this was taking. If this was some established trade route or even a variation of one, it was a poor one. You would figure that bandits could move a bit quicker than this but obviously that wasn't how it happened. It was pitiful.

I felt Hiccup nudge me a bit, he and I having stuck very close to one another as we moved through the icy marsh. I wanted to comfort him as I had the eve before. He had probably never heard of such a place and it almost seemed nightmarish to him in a way.

It was nightmarish to me.

I gave his hand a silent conspicuous squeeze and turned my attention back to Sarah who now held up her left hand. "We are here." She said as the four of us crouched down, prepping to carry out our hastily conjured plot.

We had readied a plan of some sort, one that was a bit... spurred on the spot but would prove effective enough.

We had decided on a small series of consecutive strikes to be delivered by us in groups. Merida and Sarah moved forward first...

It was silent... watching those two effectively dispatch the sentries guarding the entrance to Arit's camp.

I swung my staff overhead and cracked the ground sentry across his face, silently dropping into the murky marsh floor.

Hiccup decided to keep his sword away until it was needed, settling on his pockets side knife, and he nodded at me on as he set the body down.

I rushed forward as I swung my staff down as a wide but short blade connected to it... and his foot connected with my gut, and it hurt like hell.

The man turned around to reveal a handsome, but obviously insane, face. He wielded two daggers and walked with a Bandits swagger.

"You five must think yourselves pretty clever... but you underestimated your opponent. I'm Arit. Son of Arit... and this is gonna be your burial ground."

Hiccup.

I had my sword sprung and ready as the five of us starred off with Arit. "So that bastard Flynn finally decided a move against me? Typical Sheep, blindly following tradition like a damn Shepard. Too bad he wasn't different then the rest. I always liked him... oh who am I kidding? He was a fucking prick who I put up with."

"You sound like you need a vacation Arit. Ever tried death? I hear its eternal..." Sarah spat venomously, arrow trained and unmoving from her spot on his face. Her eyes burned with fury as Arit smirked at her.

"So Flynn's got you delivering messages? I guess he really wasted the gem I left him..." he said with a knowing undertone as she growled and pulled her bow string tighter, "I chose to come on this trip... Flynn couldn't stop me if he tried..." she said as Arit laughed.

"So, what, you and these halfwit wannabe heros decided to quest for holy vengeance against the man who-" he began but she suddenly screamed, "You have no right to speak of it! Now shut up and die!" And she let her arrow fly... hearing it cling against his blade.

I starred in shock as he literally deflected an arrow on his own. This man... was not normal. I nodded at Rapunzel as the dagger was

drawn and she cartwheeled forward as she and I began engaging Arit in combat... letting the others deal with his minions.

Arit was incredibly skilled with those roughish daggers, easily repelling Punzie and my attacks... and not letting us get a real attack in edgewise.

She suddenly did a swift kick and cartwheeled away, slashing a bandit across the throat as she called out her swift return... leaving Arit to press the attack against me... which became doubly difficult... he was so fast I could barely parry him.

Jack, Merida and Sarah were repelling his bandit cronies rather easily... not noticing me. Suddenly, Arit had me disarmed... me as his foot connected to my chest.

I felt my hair get coated in mud and cold water as I desperately reached for my blade... but he simply pressed my wrist into the dirt as he raised his blades. His eyes glowing with mad fire...

And I felt the warm rush of blood... but as to how I was feeling it was... impossible. I should be dead.

I opened my eyes and saw a dagger get ripped from Arit's neck. Rapunzel wiped it off on the ground as the others stood in awe and fear as Arit fell, clutching his neck in pain as he died.

Sarah didn't give him the pleasure as she and crushed his head over and over with the heel of her boot... "You'll never touch another woman again you bastard!" She said as... it seemed a few stray tears fell from her eyes... as Arit's remaining men scattered... never to return.

Sarah looked up at us, eyes finally pruned off the man who had... done some obviously horrible things to her. Her eyes seemed... quiet. At peace for once.

She nodded at us as she spoke up, "Thank you... we should return to Flynn now..." she said as she holstered her bow and began to lead the way back that we came from... the rest of us holding silence... but this time for a different reason than why we were on the way.

She deserved a few minutes of real silence... silence where the demons of her past weren't haunting her.

Hiccup (cont.)

"Well, I'll be damned." Flynn said as he released Toothless and reholstered Atlas. He smiled at the four of us as Sarah rejoined him, obviously not wanting to discuss the events that took place... yet.

Flynn was pleased with our performance... you could see it in his eyes. I couldn't say killing a bandit was my idea of what I should be proud of... but the lives I have probably saved are worth the death of a man like Arit.

Flynn sighed, "Well, you four are free, as per our arrangement. Now we can reestablish trades and perform a few raids." He said with a confident smile... but I had heard enough. This... this was not

honorable.

I stepped forward, "No... you and your crew are going to the Imperial city to join the army." I said as everyone starred at me in bewilderment. Flynn sat forward, "Hiccup, we aren't soldiers. We're bandits, here. Solely dedicated to doing what no one else will do for what they need."

"And that is exactly what we need. We need men and women like you guys. Willing to do what no one else will. Its gotta be better than this. I authorize it with a note I will send with my signiture."

Flynn sat back, "I don't know, king... why should I?" He said with a smirk and I returned it, drawing my sword, coated in flame. "Your king... demands it." I said as I quicjly knighted him in my service... before smacking his face, "And that is so you remember it."*

And thats how it began. It was an unexpected ally gained in Flynn... but it did me more than one favor. It gained notoriety for our cause, gained me some fearless soldiers... and it will let Drago know that my kingdom will unite under my rule.

I drew up the letter and signed it, giving it to Flynn as his camp packed up to move south... and camp outside the city for as long as the war was on.

And with a quick step, we resumed our path... a week out fron our first major destination. Arindell.

**So, this was a slightly shorter chapter than previous ones but it sets us up for future chapters. **

Which the next will be bringing around a certain ice queen. Are you excited?

**One asterisk... one that sets up our next character creation competition. **

**What movie is that line from? THE FIRST to tell me gets a spot in the next chapter. **

**Good luck. **

Until next time.

End
file.